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**Volume 82, No. 1** **October 2003**

# THE SUGAR BULLETIN

**Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A.**

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**The mission of the American Sugar Cane League is to sustain success through effective research, positive legislation, public relations/promotion, and education.**

# The Sugar Bulletin

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# UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Charlie Melancon

## Disaster Assistance - Trade Issues
## Weights/Transportation - Burning/Record Keeping

I know I need not have to tell anyone, but at this writing Mike Salassi of LSU and Willie Cooper and his parish FSA people are still valiantly attempting to certify the acreage data. Additionally, as most of you know also, we learned in the past several weeks that some people who had made "simple" changes to their business organization ( i.e. . . change of name, change from partnership to LLC or a corporation, etc. . .) found themselves facing a national rule that may disqualify them from being eligible to receive assistance.

With regards to the efforts of Mike, Willie and their people, I wish to again commend them for their efforts and diligent work. While we have not reached certification of all acreage, it is not their fault, but instead, their efforts that have us close to getting the long awaited checks delivered. I know it is quite frustrating for many of you in the industry, but this only points out the need to keep accurate records and report this information as has been requested in the past. For the future, the sugar section of the farm bill provides that acreage and yield "will" be provided to USDA. The League has a group of mill people and growers, headed by Charlie Schudmak of Cora-Texas mill, working to establish a code system at the mills. This would facilitate every load of cane being assigned to a farm serial number and that information being transferred electronically to the appropriate FSA office as the crop is harvested, rather than being dumped in their laps (if you would excuse the expression) all at one time after the harvest. Additionally, some parishes had not been collecting yield data, thus causing additional unforseen delays in getting the disaster money out to the industry. Having such a system in place does not preclude farmers still having to certify their acreage and yield, but it should help expedite that process tremendously.

As it regards farm name changes and business structure changes, the League has expressed its concern with the disqualifying of legitimate entities who were damaged by last year's weather from receiving federal disaster assistance money. The rules that govern this issue were put in place by the federal government to discourage program crop growers from setting up multiple entities to circumvent payment limitations (caps). Sugar cane is not a program crop and its growers have never participated in operation name changes and business structure changes to gain financial advantage in receiving government support. Consequently, our concern is that legitimate changes took place for liability and other financial considerations during the selected years to be used for base selection, and

this should not be a hindrance to those grower operations. As it has been explained to me, it is difficult for the USDA to differentiate some changes from other changes. I am hopeful that the USDA will be able to find a clear procedure that can resolve those growers' situations. Just know that it is being addressed. In the meantime, if you have been disqualified because of this rule, you may wish to submit an appeal to the local and state committees. Again, I am hopeful that a resolve can be reached on many of these situations.

**Trade Issues**

Don Wallace in his Washington Update reports on the WTO Ministerial meeting in Cancun. In the meantime, with the delays associated with the collapse of an agreement in the Mexico meetings, it now allows us the opportunity to focus on the FTA's and other bilateral agreements being negotiated by the USTR (U.S. Trade Representative). It is our understanding that the Louisiana Banker's Association and the Production Credit Association have requested a study of the economic impact to the state of Louisiana should these agreements go forth with sugar included. I have not seen the study, but understand that this information, when completed, will be provided to our Congressional delegation and others. While concerned as are you and I are with our inclusion in these agreements, I am hopeful and optimistic that we can clearly demonstrate to USTR, Congress and this administration our ability to compete internationally in a "free trade" of sugar, but cannot do so if we are required to give every sugar producing country part of our market while there continues to be multiple subsidizing schemes world wide. I repeat what I have always said, that is that our industry can readily compete in the production of sugar and at a competitive production cost level, farmer to farmer, but we can't compete with those foreign farmers' governments.

**Weights / Transportation**

As I think most of the industry is aware, we are in a five year phase-in for converting cane trailers to allow for the continuation of hauling at the 100,000 pound GVW. This still includes state and federal highways. While the renewal of the federal highway transportation bill is not finalized nor passed, I have been advised that there is no perception of any problems with getting the renewal of our federal language approved when the legislation does go forward. That is expected to occur before the end of this year. In the meantime, please make sure you purchase your permits and continue to make a concerted effort to load your trucks properly. The industry has demonstrated to the state and federal people that we are trying to do a good job, and more importantly, abide by the law. So, please continue to improve on making sure your vehicles are in compliance as we begin the 2003-04 harvest. Should anyone have any question regarding the hauling of sugar cane, please give me a call. If I can't answer the question, I will get the answer for you. I hope this harvest is drier than last year. . . and by a substantial amount. I have come to understand that we should not ask the good Lord for more rain or less rain, but only for a bountiful crop. Praying for rain as we did last year apparently sent the wrong message! Good luck and I hope everyone has a safe and successful harvest.

**Burning/ Record Keeping**

I would understand if someone said that I was beating an old horse to death by commenting on field burning every year. But, to the contrary, I feel it is ever important to repeat this comment to you. As the majority of you are aware, there was a law suit tried this past July over the burning of cane in the field. The one issue that appeared to resonate throughout the trial was the fact that the defendant had excellent records on his harvest operations, particularly his field burning schedule, etc . . . and as set out in the BMP's that most all of you have reviewed. Please, if you haven't, review these BMP's again this year, and note that good record keeping is as essential to doing a good job at burning as it should, should you find yourself on the defense in a court of law. Please continue to be cautious with your field burning. It is vitally important to you and the industry.

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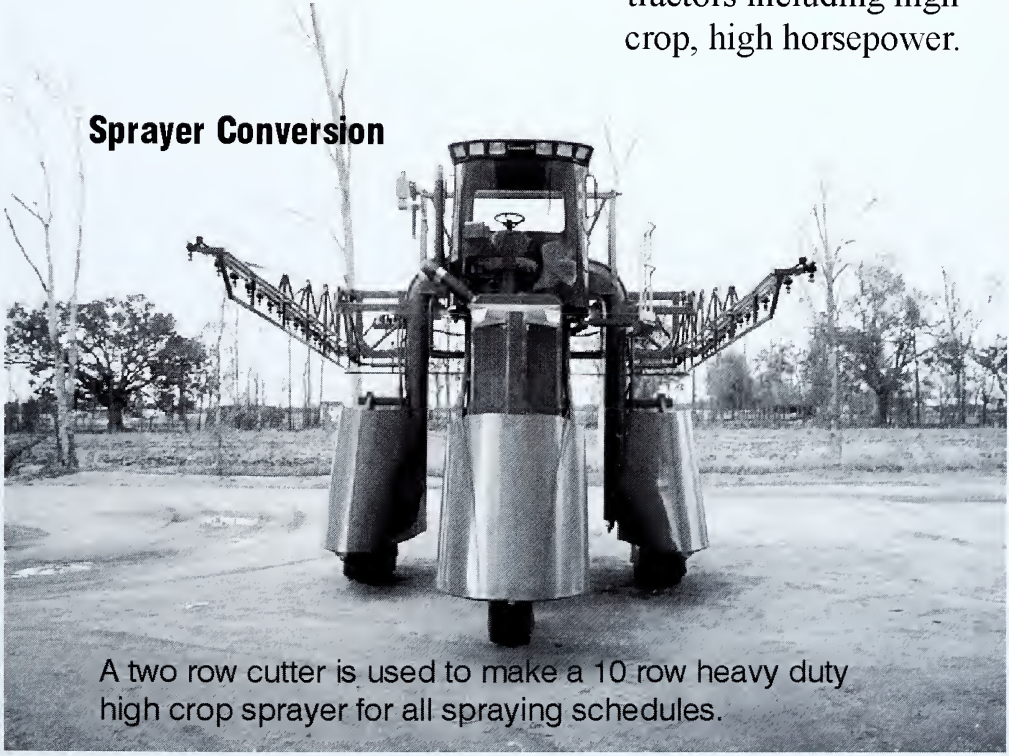

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# WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

## Agricultural Appropriations Bills
## WTO Trade Negotiations Stall In Cancun
## Industry Urges Reduction In OAQ
## USDA WASDE September Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

To date, the House has voted on all 13 appropriations packages, compared to only 5 packages approved in the Senate, including the Labor/Health and Human Services appropriations bill approved on September 10. No conferences have been completed on the 5 bills the Senate has approved. The Senate could take up agriculture appropriations upon completion of work on the energy and water appropriations bill in mid-September.

**WTO Trade Negotiations Stall In Cancun**

The WTO ministerial meeting in Cancun in early September saw a strong coalition of developing countries expressing strong opposition to the draft ministerial text for negotiations. While agriculture continues to be a major sticking point in negotiations, the failure to achieve an agreement on the basis for negotiating an agreement was the result of opposition to other components of the text, such as investment, government procurement and other issues. The early analysis coming out of Cancun is that the failure to win agreement to move forward under the draft text will push real negotiations back to 2005. ASCL was represented at the ministerial meeting by Charles Thibaut, Jackie Theriot, Charlie Melancon, Macon Edwards and myself.

While supportive of efforts at the multilateral negotiating table to end the multitude of trade distorting policies that make sugar one of the most distorted world markets, the US sugar industry voiced concern about two issues in the draft ministerial text. First, the text contained excessive special and differential treatment for developing countries, who account for approximately 75% of world sugar production and trade. Second, the continued focus on the direct and transparent trade distorting subsidies and practices that were the focus of the Uruguay Round of negotiations, while the many indirect and less transparent trade distorting policies that abound in the world sugar market. Such neglected issues include government ownership and control, cross-subsidization, indirect export subsidies, forced dumping, and currency devaluation. The US industry continues to urge a sector-specific approach to sugar trade negotiations at the multilateral level.

**Industry Urges Reduction In OAQ**

In early September, a broad majority of sugar processing interests sent a letter to USDA Undersecretary J. B. Penn urging a reduction in the Overall Allotment Quantity. The group, including the entire Louisiana processing industry, warned that market prices were falling close to loan forfeiture ranges, hampering the Administration's ability to avoid forfeitures and government costs while putting vulnerable sugar producers at extreme financial risk. The group stressed that supply and demand estimates that were utilized in the OAQ calculation are questionable and that the Administration needs the flexibility of a lower OAQ, particularly with Mexican negotiations on-going.

**USDA WASDE September Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released**

The USDA released its September World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. Projected U.S. sugar production for fiscal year 2002/03 was reduced slightly to 8,386,000 from 8,402,000 short tons (raw value) tons in August. The 2002/03 beet production estimate was lowered again to 4,397,000 from 4,416,000 short tons last month, while cane production was unchanged at 3,986,000. Louisiana production was estimated at 1,386,000. 2002/03 total imports were increased slightly to 1,679,000 from 1,664,000 short tons last month. Imports under TRQ were lowered to 1,214,000 from 1,239,000 short tons last month. Total supply was lowered 1,000 tons to 11,346,000 short tons. 2002/03 exports were increased to 140,000 from 135,000 short tons last month, but ending stocks were raised to 1,691,000 from 1,602,000 in August, driving the 2002/03 ending stocks-to-use ratio to 17.5 percent from 16.4 percent in August.

2003/04 production was lowered to 8,812,000 short tons from 8,885,000 in August, with beet production falling slightly to 4,651,000 from 4,659,000 in August. Cane production is lower at 4,161,000 from 4,226,000 in August, with Louisiana cane sugar production falling to 1,558,000 from 1,628,000 short tons in August. The higher beginning stocks more than offset the slight drop in production, leading to an increase in 2003/04 total supply to 12,087,000 from 12,068,000 short tons in August. Exports were unchanged while domestic uses were lowered by 150,000 tons, resulting in a drop in total use to 10,075,000 short tons from 10,210,000 in August. Ending stocks were increased to 2,012,000 short tons from 1,858,000 in August, resulting in an increase in the stocks-to-use ratio to 20 percent from 18.2 percent in August.


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# ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

## Crop Report - Sugarcane Ripener Application
## Smoke Management - Distribution of HoCP 96-540

Scattered showers have continued to plague the Louisiana sugar industry. At this time, most growers have completed their planting. However, many fields in the Houma and Thibodaux area are still receiving nearly daily rains; this is much of the same area that did not complete their planting last year. At the writing of this article on September 15, 2003, the scheduled date for the opening of the first sugar mill is September 16th. The remaining mills will follow Cajun Co-op very closely and all should be receiving cane by the first of October. Hopefully, even though harvest has started with improving weather conditions, and if a hurricane or tropical weather does not call upon the industry, those growers who have not yet completed their planting will be able to do so. For the most part, those growers who have finished their planting are pretty much satisfied with their planting ratios. As reported in last month's article, planting ratios have ranged from a high of eight to one where the cane was planted by hand, to a low of three to one where fields were planted with mechanical planters using billets.

**Sugarcane Ripener Application**

Many of the early applications of sugarcane ripener seem to have affected the cane very rapidly and very obviously. Many of the fields that received these first applications soon turned yellow, and now there is a very obvious difference in the height of treated and non-treated fields. Reports from pre-harvest sucrose samples indicate that the sugar in cane this year is considerably higher than for the same time period last year. Also in these pre-harvest reports there appears to be a fifteen to thirty pound increase in sugar content for fields that have been treated with a ripener when compared to fields that have not been treated. The use of Polado-L® has been a very valuable tool and when used correctly, it has increased profit for both the cane grower and cane processor. However, many growers have over extended and overused the product on their acreage. A few growers have exceeded the recommended rates and the recommended time frame for the harvest of Polado-L® treated cane. This year there is an additional chemical sugarcane ripener (Touchdown IQ™) available to growers. In comparative tests, Touchdown IQ™ has preformed as well as Polado-L®. Although both chemical ripeners are derivatives of glyphosate, the rates of the compound used per acre are not the same. All label recommendations for both chemical ripeners should be followed. Growers are reminded to contact their county agent if they have any questions regarding the rate and the length of time from application to harvest for either ripener. Hopefully soon, with a few cool days and nights and drying conditions, the sucrose will increase even more

**Smoke Management**

With the start of harvest season just a day or two away growers are reminded that their continued ability to burn cane either pre or post

harvest depends upon the manner in which the public perceives their actions, and how well they continue to reduce the number of complaints from the general public. With the rain last year, there were very few fields burned during or after harvest, therefore there were very few complaints about smoke and ash. Many fields harvested during the first few weeks are not burned prior to their harvest. There are two main reasons for not burning fields at this time. Fields are too close together to safely burn, or the mills have requested that growers not burn during the hot weather. In hot weather, any delay in the delivery of pre-burned fields or in the processing of chopped burnt cane will make the cane deteriorate more rapidly.

Most of us in the cane industry consider the burning of cane a right and not a privilege. However, most of the other citizens who live in the cane belt consider the burning of cane a nuisance and something that they would prefer not to have to experience each fall. Unfortunately, so do most environmental regulatory agencies. If the industry does not continue to follow all of the recommendations and practices outlined in the Smoke Management Handbook (although voluntary), the privilege of burning cane could be lost. Please review the Smoke Management Handbook. If you have misplaced your copy, a new copy may be obtained from your county agent. In addition, there are a few at the League office. The privilege of burning could be lost either by regulatory process, or from lack of liability insurance coverage. Even though companies are willing to write coverage, it could come at such high cost as to be unaffordable.

The loss of insurance coverage could also be a future problem for highway hazards (mud on highways) during harvest. Most growers have been very cooperative in reducing the amount of mud and trash that they are responsible for putting onto the highways. However, there are a few who operate without consideration of the public or to their neighboring cane farmers. If we do not tend to our own house then either some government agency or the insurance companies will do so for us.

**Distribution of HoCP 96-540**

On behalf of Herman and myself, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all secondary station operators for their outstanding cooperation in the distribution of seed cane of the new variety HoCP 96-540. In discussions with growers, everyone who received seed cane of the new variety were very much pleased with the quality of the seed and the cooperation that they received from the secondary station from which they picked up the seed. This was perhaps the most applications for a new variety that the league has received. About 3,600 tons of the new variety were distributed from the 40 or so secondary stations. Growers arrived with everything from flatbed trailers to dump trucks to pick up their cane. Although filling the request for the seed was time consuming, all the secondary stations made accommodations for the deliveries to the growers who were assigned to their secondary station. Once again thank you all very much for your understanding and cooperation.

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# ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

By James F. Coerver, P.E.
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## REVISED NSR RULE

On August 27, 2003, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) promulgated a new final rule on New Source Review (NSR). NSR is a provision of the Clean Air Act that requires all major new sources of air pollution, such as new boilers for an electric power plant (or sugar mill), to undergo and pass a Federal/State review before any new construction may be undertaken. When Congress approved the NSR provision, it was clearly understood that it referred only to new sources and not the numerous sources then in existence and which were to be regulated by other provisions of the Clean Air Act. The original rules allowed existing sources to be maintained, and component parts replaced in-kind, so long as there was no increase in permitted emission rates. By allowing existing sources to continue operating until wear-out necessitates replacement with new sources subject to NSR review requiring best available pollution control technology, ambient levels of sulfur dioxide declined 50 percent, nitrogen dioxide 27 percent and ozone 12 percent during the period from 1981-2000 (according to the *Wall Street Journal*, 9/15/03).

Radical environmentalists and other anti-business interest are very displeased that industrial facilities in operation at passage of the Clean Air Act have not all worn out or been put out of business. One of the more obnoxious environmental initiatives during the waning years of the Clinton/Gore administration was to change the long-standing EPA policy (not regulations) that allowed routine maintenance of existing facilities without ungoing NSR requiring installation of best available pollution control technology. The Clinton/Gore administration filed suit against the largest electric power generators and oil refiners demanding huge fines and plant closure or the installation of unnecessary and prohibitively expensive additional pollution control facilities. One of the first environmental actions of the incoming Bush/Cheney administration was to put this malicious and subversive environmental mischief "on hold for review." Needless to say, environmentalists supported enthusiastically by the news media, lambasted the President for what they say is environmental "backsliding."

The results of a thorough review upheld the Bush administration's opinion that the Clinton/Gore NSR "policy" was unlawful, and rules were proposed to set NSR back to where it was before the Clinton/Gore fiasco. This caused lawsuits to be filed and Congressional hearings to be called, all in response to the outrage expressed publicly by radical environmentalist organizations and the environmental lobby. However, courts have subsequently ruled in favor of the Bush position, and the Senate rejected a Democrat-led effort to delay Bush administration rules establishing common sense procedures for implementing NSR the way intended by the Clean Air Act as amended.

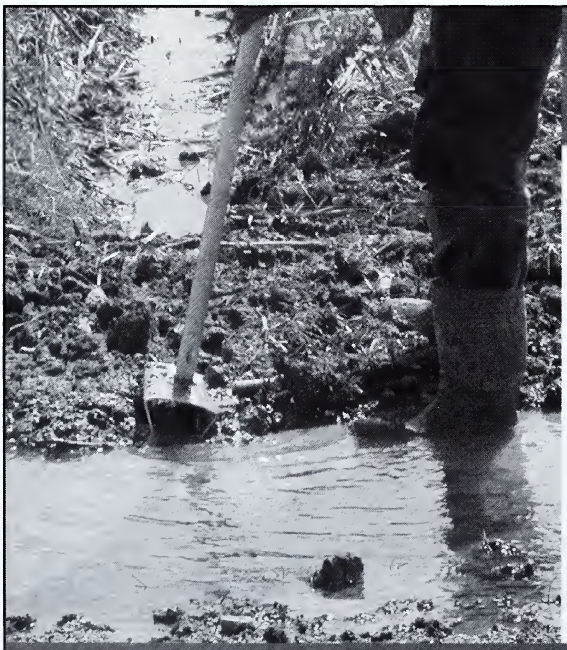
While the August 28, 2003, NSR rule did draw immediately another round of condemnation by environmental loonies, the

news media response seems thus far to be muted. It appears that the news media is aware that the new rule is on firm legal grounds and that the environmentalist allegations about the rule were false. However, the recent power outage in the northeast probably did more than anything else to firm up public support for the NSR rule and to stifle unfair criticism.

Coal-fired electric power plants were the primary target of the unlawful Clinton/Gore attack. The perverse thinking was that by denying power plants the long-standing right to maintain facilities and replace worn-out component parts such as motors and pumps, these plants would be forced to shut down long before otherwise becoming obsolete and be replaced with new facilities. The fact that maintaining and replacing parts does not increase pollution, and sometimes reduces pollution and/or increases power output if more efficient parts are used in replacement, was considered "bad" because it delayed closing of plants and benefitted industry (as well as the public). Repeated warning, that the power industry could not afford to immediately abandon such assets to switch to more costly and scarce natural gas or imported fuel oil, and that electricity supply was already limited, were brushed aside as unfounded excuses. It took a natural gas shortage, spike in oil prices and a wide area blackout lasting several days to help the general public to realize that they were being deceived all along by perpetrators of the Clinton/Gore NSR policy scam.

The new NSR rule also contains a provision that prevents abuse of maintenance authority. The EPA will now allow only up to 20 percent of the costs of replacing each plant's production system to be considered "routine maintenance" not requiring NSR, and thus the installation of expensive new anti-pollution controls. While the 20 percent limit is not generous, it at least does provide a legal defense against arguments that the rule may unnecessarily prolong the life of out-moded and inefficient plants.

Of course, the new rule also makes it again lawful for sugar mills to continue maintaining and repairing boilers and ancillary facilities as necessary.

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By Dr. Peter Rein
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# The Optimum Use of Water and Condensate in a Sugar Mill

In doing our rounds of visits to the mills during the off-crop, it has been apparent that management of water circuits within the mills has often been neglected. This is not surprising since it is not generally a high priority item in terms of getting the cane crushed. But it does have consequences, and if done appropriately brings advantages both in terms of better sugar recoveries, reduced costs and reduced effluent outflows.

## 1. Factory water balance

*a. Water inputs and losses*

A cane sugar mill processes more water than sugar. A mill grinding 400 t cane/h will be processing nearly 300 t water/h in the cane. In theory, there is a surplus of water produced in a sugar mill which will find its way out of the mill in an effluent stream. Some water leaves the mill in the molasses and in the filter cake. Other losses from the total factory include boiler blow down, evaporation in cooling towers and scrubbers, cooling tower or spray pond overflow and drift loss and water in boiler ash or smuts from wet scrubbers on the boilers. However there is still a surplus which has to leave the mill in one form or another.

*b. Water balances*

It is possible to do an overall balance over the total sugar mill site, as well as internal balances within the mill, in which water and condensates are re-used for process and other uses. A diagram identifying the water flows into and out of the mill complex is shown in Figure 1.

From the overall balance, it can be shown that roughly 35 % of the water entering in the cane is surplus, which ultimately has to be wasted from the mill. The more energy-efficient a factory, the larger is the surplus produced. Any other water added into the sugar mill complex augments this quantity by the amount of water added.

Cane wash water does not affect the surplus, as it is all recycled water. If it is once-through water, then it does add to the surplus, as the wash water entrained with the cane is an additional input of water into the system. Once-through injection water does reduce the surplus, since it effectively removes all the water condensed by direct condensing. This could substantially reduce the surplus.

Within the mill, condensate is recycled as boiler feed water and as process water. The best quality condensate is used for boiler feed. Condensate is generally of better quality than raw water supplies available, and is therefore the water of choice for process use. This minimizes the impurity content of the juice, which can be significantly increased if poor quality water is used, and which leads to increased molasses production.

## 2. Boiler feed water

*a. Condensate recovery*

The quantity of condensate produced in a mill is much larger than the amount required in the boilers as feed water. The surplus should be used for process water duties. The surplus can be increased by flashing pan and evaporator condensates into appropriate evaporator calandrias. This eliminates flash to the atmosphere which is lost, and at the same time improves the steam economy of the factory quite substantially.

Any blow-off of exhaust steam reduces the amount of good quality condensate available and so any regular blow-off should be eliminated entirely by making changes to adjust the steam usage pattern. Outside sources of raw water for boiler feed make-up can be eliminated entirely if proper attention is given to the management of the boiler feed water and condensate circuits in the mill.

*b. Condensate quality*

The best quality condensate should always be used in preference for boiler feed. This generally means using exhaust steam condensate to the maximum extent, since it is the cleanest. Vapor I and later vapor condensates can potentially be contaminated by carry over of sugar juice during boiling. They are also contaminated to a greater or lesser extent with volatile components, which are evaporated with water in the evaporators and pans. Apart from sugar, these condensates can contain small quantities of ethanol, volatile organic acids such as formic and acetic acid, and ammonia. However they are still preferred to raw water as a source of feed water make-up.

In evaporators and pans, the condensing steam is at a higher pressure than the liquid being boiled. Thus if there is a tube leak, condensate or steam will leak into the boiling liquid, and the condensate will not necessarily be contaminated, unless for instance a pan is struck and for a short period of time the pressure on the liquid side is greater than that in the calandria. However on juice heaters, the pressure of the liquid in the tubes is higher than that on the steam side. In that case a tube leak will immediately result in contamination of the condensate, which can be severe. For this reason heater condensate should not be considered as a condensate return stream to the boilers, even if it is exhaust condensate.

*c. Sugar trace monitoring*

This is often done on-line by measuring the conductivity of the condensate stream. It is an approximate method, since it does not measure sugar at all, but the ionic impurities in the juice or syrup with the sugar. Sometimes spurious high conductivity readings are obtained, due to components that have been volatilized and not associated with physical carry over of sugar. Automatic dumpling of condensate based on conductivity will sometimes result in condensate being dumped unnecessarily. This is not normally a problem because there is a surplus for feed water use. Conductivity measurements used in this way are very useful and have a quick response, but cannot replace routine laboratory sugar trace checks.

The maximum amount of sugar contamination acceptable in boiler feed water depends on the boiler pressure. In the Louisiana context, a maximum sugar content of 15 ppm can be tolerated. Regular laboratory checks on all condensates are essential to keep a check on entrainment, carry over or contamination occurring. High levels are used to alert the operators to process problems that may be occurring in the plant.

*d. Boiler feed water storage.*

It is very important that sufficient feed water storage capacity is provided, to ensure that there is always sufficient water of good quality available for periods of unsteady running, for startup and shutdown and to cover any problems with the condensate systems. Various rules of thumb have been suggested, but a minimum storage capacity equivalent to four hours steaming at average rate is recommended, including storage in the hot well.

## 3. Process water requirements

To the extent possible, condensate should always be used for all water added in the process. This includes imbibition water and water used in the factory. Condensate is the purest source of water available. Any other source of water

contains impurities. Some sources such as condenser water contain a high load of impurities and organic acids, and sometimes a high population of microorganisms. The effect of the added impurities is to increase the amount of molasses produced, thus increasing the loss of sugar in molasses.

The microorganisms can also lead to additional losses of sugar and production of unwanted impurities and organic acids. It is already known that high loads of organic acids require more lime for neutralization and can lead to acidic condensates.

Sufficient storage capacity for surplus condensate should be provided, so that when there are fluctuations in crushing rate or supply of condensate, any surplus can be captured and used to supply the factory needs.

*a. Imbibition*

The amount of imbibition varies widely in different sugar industries, varying from as little as 15% on cane to over 60% on cane. The best supply to use for imbibition is condensate, and preferably at as high a temperature as possible. Generally there is more surplus condensate available than is required for imbibition. Some milling tandems are able to use hot condensate, but most operators of mill tandems opt to use a lower temperature. The high temperature is reported to melt waxes which increase the slip and make throughputs difficult to achieve. However some mills have shown that hot imbibition can be used to advantage. The higher temperatures do lower the coefficient of friction but this can be overcome with suitably rough mill rolls.

If lower imbibition temperatures are required, it is better to cool the condensate by heating the mixed juice than to add lower quality water to the imbibition supply tank to reduce its temperature.

*b. Flocculant water*

The ideal water for flocculant make up should contain no ionic species. Thus condensate is the best option. However there is a temperature limit which should not be exceeded, or damage to the flocculant will occur. Thus condensate should be cooled to below 140 °F. The quantity of water required is not large and is normally neglected in a water balance.

*c. Factory water requirements*

A supply of hot water, preferably condensate is required for the filters. Hot condensate is required for centrifugal wash water and for conditioning of A and B molasses for pan feed. Water is also necessary for remelting surplus low-grade sugar and for making magma for pan footings, but clarified juice is sometimes used for these duties to improve steam economy.

## 4. Requirements for additional sources of water

*a. Raw water*

Most mills have access to a supply of raw water e.g. from a river or well, which can be used for wash water or washing down or at startup to provide an initial supply of water. The use of external supplies should be kept to a minimum, as they inflate the quantity to be disposed of ultimately. It is possible for a mill to exist without an external supply, providing water circuits in the mill are carefully managed.

*b. Scrubber water*

Generally a low quality source of water is used to make up the boiler water scrubber circuit. This is to replace water evaporated in the scrubber by the hot boiler gases and the water in the ash and / or smuts dumped from the system

*c. Cane wash water*

Cane wash water is sourced differently in different mills. Ideally the water should be clean so that water entrained with the cane into the factory does not add to the impurity load. This is not normally possible, but if different qualities are available, the last rinse should be given with the best quality water. Preferably the system is made up with surplus water from elsewhere e.g. the cooling system overflow. The same principle applies, that any outside water sources brought in for cane washing add to the quantity of surplus water to be handled.

## 5. Treatment and recycling of effluent

All mills will have a surplus of water to dispose of. Most Louisiana mills have ponding systems in which all surplus water is contained during the crushing season, and treated during the off-season. This is only an option for mills with a short crushing season.

A problem facing some mills is the fact that the mills have expanded their crushing capacity but have not increased the size of their ponds. In this case, attempts should be made to reduce the quantity produced. Because of the reduced size in relation to the mill capacity, very little removal of impurities is achieved in the ponds and recycled water quality is poor.

In addressing an effluent problem, the first principle is always to reduce the quantity (as discussed above) and improve the quality of the effluent (reducing the organic load in the effluent). Elimination or containment of spills and leaks and appropriate recycling can help. Another way to reduce the load on the effluent system is to find a use for filter cake in solid form, rather than sluicing it to the ponds.

## 6. Conclusions

To the extent possible, only surplus condensate should be used for process water in a sugar mill, including imbibition. This requires that adequate storage for surplus condensate should be provided. This will reduce the loss of sugar in molasses.

Care should be taken of the exhaust condensates as the most desirable source of boiler feed water. Close monitoring of make-up condensates will minimize problems in the boilers.

As effluent ponds are increasingly being stretched, a reduction in effluent production can be achieved by reducing to a minimum water flows from external sources into the factory, apart from the water in cane.

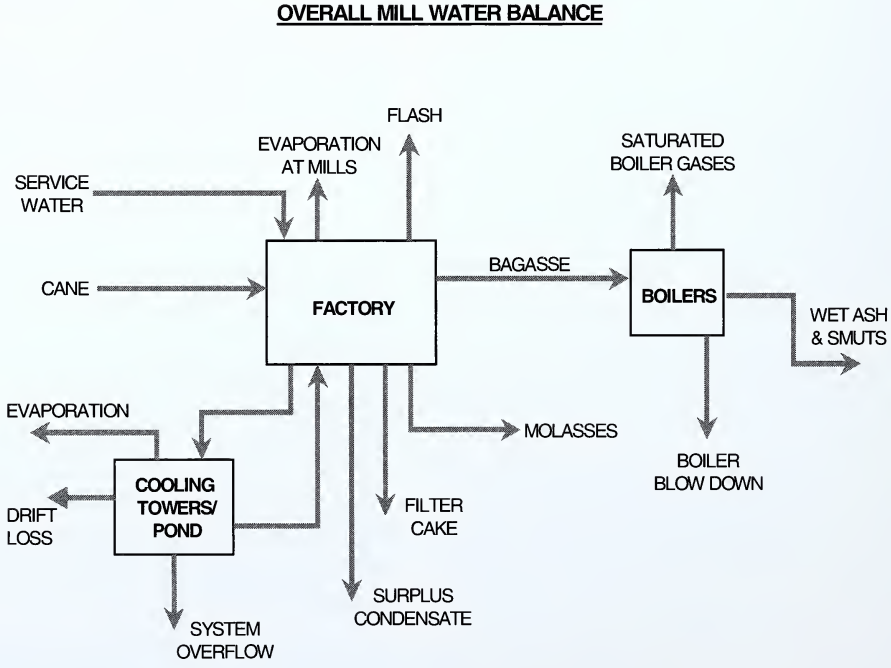


Figure 1. Schematic diagram of water flows in a sugar mill.

# The Application of Precision Farming Technologies to Sugarcane - Using Soil Electrical Conductivity for Variable Nitrogen Rate Management

**H. P. "Sonny" Viator, Bob Downer and Maurice Wolcott**
**LSUAgCenter**

Precision farming, defined as the use of information technologies for the purpose of customizing management to address specific field conditions, has not been embraced by sugarcane growers because of the unavailability of commercial yield monitors for combines. With several prototypical yield monitors currently being evaluated, sugarcane yield mapping capabilities are imminent. Yield monitoring and field mapping will allow growers to gain an appreciation for the tremendous variability in yield within fields that appear uniform (Richard Johnson, Research Agronomist with the Sugarcane Research Unit at Houma, has demonstrated a range in yield from 10 to 60 tons of cane per acre within the same field). Mapping will most certainly lead sugarcane growers to look for reasons and remedies for field variations such as this. For over a decade, growers of other crops have used precision farming to monitor and map yields; vary rates of fertilizer, seeds and herbicides; and for isolating field problems such as drainage.

Precision farming practitioners typically use global positioning systems to reference soil sampling to determine the fertility status of fields. This approach normally utilizes a costly and impractical grid pattern for sampling to accurately map soil nutrient content. Sensors are alternatives for measuring soil properties without the need to physically collect and process soil samples. One measurement that has yet to be fully proven is soil electrical conductivity (EC). Numerous studies have associated soil EC with differences in soil texture, soil water content, salinity and other factors that directly influence plant growth. The objective of our research is to determine if EC measurements could be used as a substitute measure of more costly soil chemical and physical measurements. More specifically, could the zones of similar EC measurements be used for variable rate applications of inputs like fertilizer and herbicides? Uniform applications of fertilizer can result in some areas of the field being over or under fertilized. Such inconsistency increases opportunity for non-point source runoff and ground water contamination as well as lower economic returns.

Procedures:

Large, 30-acre fallow sugarcane fields in St. Mary Parish (cooperators were Joel Luke and Renè Simon) were mapped for EC using a Veris mapping cart. Additionally, soil samples were collected on a 1-acre grid on the Simon field and as directed by EC zones on the Luke field. These soil samples were used to measure nutrient and organic matter content and determine soil textural class. Table 1 shows considerable range in measurements for selected attributes. This wide range is typical of sugarcane soils and serves to spotlight the danger in using only one composite soil sample to characterize field variability.

| Table 1. Range in soil attribute measurements for cells in sampling grid | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Site** | **Organic matter, %** | **pH** | **Soil P ppm** | **Soil K ppm** | **Clay content** |
| Luke field | 1.43 to 2.43 | 4.88 to 7.33 | 41 to 124 | 170 to 384 | 11 to 60% |
| Simon field | 1.36 to 3.26 | 4.50 to 7.14 | 54 to 661 | 70 to 188 | 8 to 27% |

Figure 1 graphically compares the field variability in soil EC to that of soil texture for the Luke site. Geo-referenced maps like these, which articulate spatially stable zones, should be useful for uniquely managing areas by applying variable fertilizer rates. To determine if these zones of similar EC could be useful as a substitute for soil textural differences, multiple nitrogen rates (0, 80, 120 and 180 pounds of N/acre) were superimposed over the entire Simon field for the plant cane crop. Fertilizer N recommendations call for higher application rates on clay than on coarse-textured soil for sugarcane.

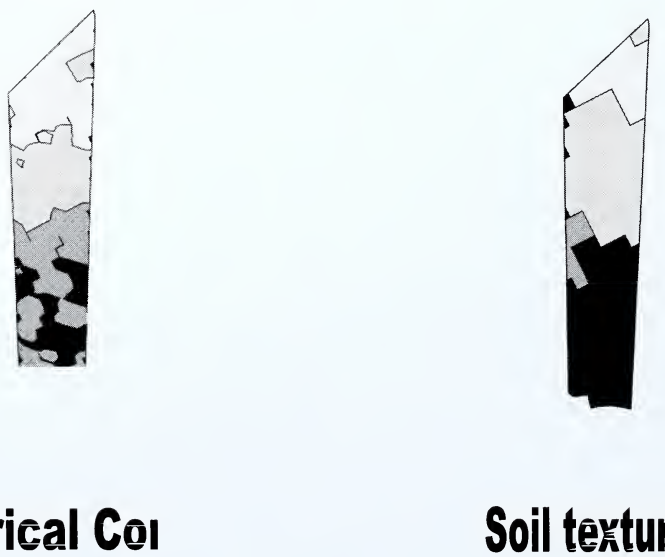


Figure 1 – Maps of the Luke field showing similarity between variation in EC and soil texture, with lighter areas corresponding to high EC and clay content. Color-coded input maps like these can be used to prescribe fertilizer rates for specific areas of the field.

Early Observations:

A couple of observations can be made from this initial evaluation of the usefulness of EC maps for site-specific management in sugarcane. As often observed with fertilizer nitrogen, plant cane in the Simon study did not respond to changes in nitrogen application rates. Stalk and sugar yields did increase numerically with increasing rates of applied N, but the differences were not statistically

significant. Stubble crops respond more predictably to N application, so the scheduled experiments on stubble crops at both locations should provide answers regarding the value of EC for guiding the application of variable N fertilizer rates.

Also, data analysis from the initial study on the Simon field has shown there to be a significant relationship between EC and yield (both tonnage and sugar). This relationship is clearly demonstrated for tonnage in Table 2. We are encouraged by this relationship, which should allow us to be able to use EC as a surrogate for soil texture in writing prescriptions to variably apply N. Specific tests scheduled for the Luke and Simon fields next growing season include: 1) The use of recommended N fertilizer rates for different soil textural classes depicted by differences in EC and 2) the integration of a yield monitor to facilitate the continued evaluation of soil electrical conductivity for use as a precision farming tool.

Table 2. Apparent Association of Soil Electrical Conductivity to the Yield of LCP 85-384

| Range in Electrical Conductivity in mS/m | Average Yield in Tons of Cane/Acre |
|---|---|
| 10 to 20 | 31.9 |
| 21 to 30 | 32.3 |
| 31 to 40 | 34.6 |
| 41 to 50 | 40.0 |

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# Dedicated Research Funding Summaries

***Scientists who receive funding from the League's Dedicated Research Committee are requested to prepare a short summary of their work at the end of the year. Those reports will be published each month until all of them have been printed. The following are final reports from research during the year 2002.***

**Optimization of Juice Clarification with Regard to Reducing Evaporator Scaling and Maximizing Non-Sugar Elimination,** *Michael Saska, Audubon Sugar Institute, Louisiana State University Agricultural Experiment Station*

**Progress Report for 2002:**

Based on the 2001 tests a brief report was published early into the 2002 grinding season in the Sugar Bulletin with recommendations aimed at improving the clarification performance. A total of ten clarification tests were performed at Cinclare, four of which involved standard hot liming to various pH levels, and six used soda ash instead of lime for neutralization of mixed juice. Each test yielded a 55 gal. drum of syrup that has been kept frozen at ASI until the pending boiling studies planned for the Spring 2003. As a part of each test, a 55 gal. drum of the factory syrup was also collected, stored frozen at ASI, and will be used in the boiling studies as the reference material. The analytical work, in each test, on the mixed juice, clarified juice and syrup has not been completed yet, but involves the standard sugar analysis with HPLC, color, turbidity (clarified juice), cation, anion, dextran and starch profiles.

On average the syrup color from soda ash tests was higher than from hot liming, although at lower pH both color and turbidity from soda ash clarification was superior to that in the factory syrup produced by hot liming. No problems with settling in soda ash trials were observed, although of course the fluid dynamics of the batch pilot settler (retention was chosen to be about 60 min) is far from those in the continuous industrial clarifiers.

The colorimetric phosphate determination, slightly modified from the SASTA procedure was used to determine phosphate levels in factory samples from several mills, viz. Cinclare, St. Martinville, Lula, Alma and Iberia. At Iberia's request, an Iberia lab personnel was instructed how to carry out the analysis. As the phosphate levels in mixed juice were found on occasions quite low, in the 100 ppm range, recommendations on adding phosphoric acid was made, as it was in the Sugar Bulletin publication, and adopted with some success by some mills. Towards the end of 2002 grinding season, a colorimetric test was set up and tested to determine soluble silicate levels in clarified juice. It is planned that this test recommended in the SASTA manual for boiler water will be in the Spring 2003 compared with the slightly more complex test described in the literature for sugar juices, and one of them then used to analyze the samples from the 2002 clarification tests. Minimization of phosphate and silicate levels in clarified juice of course is one of the objectives of good clarification as it directly impacts scaling of the evaporators.

The end pH of liming, whether in hot or cold liming, is critical and must be measured at the clarifier temperature, i.e. 200 – 210 deg. F. As the common practice is to measure and report the clarified juice and syrup pH at room temperature, a series of measurements was done at ASI to document the difference between cold and hot pH that can be as high as 0.5 pH units (pH hot < pH cold). Although well documented in sugar literature the LA sugar industry personnel do not yet generally recognize it.

**Hard To Boil Molasses: Causes And Counter-Measures**, *Michael Saska, Audubon Sugar Institute, Louisiana State University, Agricultural Experiment Station*

**Progress Report for 2002:**

The major thrust of the work at ASI was in the determination of heat transfer properties of sugarcane A molasses. Several drums each of three representative A molasses were collected and used in a series of measurements of heat transfer coefficients (HTC) on the fully automated ASI pilot vacuum pan.

Substantial differences were found in the 81 – 87 Brix range at which the A molasses boiling (B strikes) occurs. The fairly precipitous drop of HTC at around 80 Brix in the refractory molasses (Iberia and St.Martin) indicates an onset of precipitation at this Brix level on the heating surface. Although the exact chemical nature of the foulant(s) is yet undetermined, it is clear that this a water soluble layer unlike the hard scale found commonly in evaporators and pans.

Follow up tests have focused on determining the cause and solution to this problem, and involved, specifically:

a) addition in the pan of possible HTB causative agents to the "good" A molasses (St. James), viz. dextran, starch, calcium acetate, and measuring effects on HTC.

b) addition of possible adjuvants to poor boiling materials to improve boiling, viz. antifoams, surfactants, soda ash, mineral acid, and measuring their effects on HTC.

c) treatment of the feed refractory molasses prior to boiling with enzymes, granulated activated carbon, adsorbent resin and clarification with ethanol, and measuring effects on HTC.

In addition, extensive analytical testing at ASI has been initiated to investigate the polysaccharide and organic acid profiles. Surface tension and viscosity properties of the molasses are being investigated. Although these tests and the HTC tests are too numerous to report here in detail, and are still continuing in order to confirm and expand on the initial tests, a few tentative conclusions / observations can be offered:

1. the hard-to-boil- (HTB) phenomenon appears unrelated to dextran levels as determined by the MCA method. Because dextran is a ubiquitous and reliable indicator of cane deterioration, the absence of correlation with MCA dextran might be an indication that the causative agent(s) of HTB are not necessarily products of cane degradation, despite the observations that HTB appears to follow periods of extreme wet and warm weather.
2. starch levels likewise do not seem to correlate with the HTB behavior.
3. elevated levels of some organic acids, known byproducts of cane deterioration and accompanied elevated calcium levels (not shown) were noted in the HTB St. Martin material but do not appear to be causative agents of HTB.
4. some of the antifoams were found to have a small positive effect
5. no effect on HTC was found by addition to the "good" material of dextran, starch, soda ash and calcium acetate
6. small positive effects on HTC were found from treatments of HTB materials with adsorbent resin and clarification with ethanol.
7. strong positive effect on HTC appeared to result from treatment of HTB molasses with granular activated carbon and acidification with a mineral acid.

***Note: this report summarizes the work at ASI supervised by M. Saska. A separate report of the SPRI's results and accomplishments will be provided independently to ASCL by Mary An Godshall of SPRI.***

**Sugar Factory Equipment Evaluation,** *Harold Birkett and Jeanie Stein, Audubon Sugar Institute, Louisiana State University Agricultural Experiment Station*

Crystallizer equipment (vertical and Blanchard) and continuous and batch pans were evaluated at nine sugar factories during the 2002-03 crop. Temperatures, along with massecuite and molasses samples, were obtained from the pan, crystallizers, and centrifugals. Temperatures of cooling water in and out of crystallizers were also measured.

One tracer test (using zinc sulphate) was conducted on a vertical crystallizer in order to determine residence time. Samples will be analyzed for zinc.

Preliminary data is shown on the following pages:

**Summary of Data Collected for A and B Strikes**

| | Average | Maximum | Minimum |
|---|---|---|---|
| Temperature, deg. F | | | |
| A Massecuite leaving pan | 155 | 165 | 145 |
| B Massecuite leaving pan | 158 | 168 | 150 |
| Refractometer Brix | | | |
| A Massecuite | 92.1 | 93.2 | 90.8 |
| A Cyclone-leaving pan | 82.8 | 84.4 | 80.8 |
| B Massecuite | 93.8 | 95.4 | 92.0 |
| B Cyclone-leaving pan | 87.4 | 89.0 | 84.2 |
| Apparent Purity | | | |
| A Massecuite | 85.43 | 86.74 | 83.59 |
| A Cyclone-leaving pan | 66.40 | 68.56 | 62.60 |
| B Massecuite | 74.61 | 79.91 | 71.74 |
| B Cyclone-leaving pan | 49.81 | 58.72 | 42.26 |
| Purity Drops | | | |
| A Massecuite-leaving pan | 19.04 | 20.99 | 17.37 |
| B Massecuite-leaving pan | 24.79 | 29.48 | 20.79 |
| Crystal Yield, % | | | |
| A – Cyclone out pan | 56.66 | 59.08 | 55.16 |
| B – Cyclone out pan | 49.34 | 51.33 | 44.95 |

## Summary of Data Collected for C Strikes

| | Average | Maximum | Minimum |
|---|---|---|---|
| Temperature, deg. F | | | |
| C Massecuite leaving pan | 152 | 163 | 133 |
| Masse leaving vertical | 118 | 143 | 100 |
| Masse leaving Blanchard | 116 | 150 | 96 |
| Masse leaving reheater | 127 | 137 | 115 |
| Refractometer Brix | | | |
| C Massecuite | 94.5 | 96.4 | 91.8 |
| Cyclone-leaving pan | 91.4 | 94.4 | 87.8 |
| Cyclone-leaving vertical | 89.0 | 90.8 | 86.8 |
| Cyclone-leaving Blanchard | 89.6 | 92.8 | 86.0 |
| Cyclone-leaving reheater | 90.0 | 92.4 | 87.8 |
| Final Molasses | 82.6 | 86.8 | 78.6 |
| Apparent Purity | | | |
| C Massecuite | 57.51 | 62.61 | 52.51 |
| Cyclone-leaving pan | 36.97 | 41.73 | 30.09 |
| Cyclone-leaving vertical | 31.78 | 39.35 | 26.54 |
| Cyclone-leaving Blanchard | 31.00 | 34.05 | 26.31 |
| Cyclone-leaving reheater | 29.51 | 34.63 | 26.23 |
| Final Molasses | 34.17 | 38.12 | 29.28 |
| Purity Drops | | | |
| C Massecuite-leaving pan | 20.16 | 25.95 | 16.47 |
| Leaving pan to leaving vertical | 4.57 | 8.41 | 2.22 |
| Leaving vertical to leaving Blanchard | 6.21 | 7.12 | 5.30 |
| Leaving pan to leaving Blanchard | 7.91 | 12.77 | 4.20 |
| Leaving Blanchard to leaving vertical | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 |
| Leaving vertical to leaving reheater | 0.16 | 0.50 | -0.19 |
| Leaving Blanchard to final molasses | -4.04 | -1.95 | -5.31 |
| Leaving Blanchard to leaving reheater | -1.39 | -0.75 | -2.03 |
| Leaving reheater to final molasses | -3.98 | -1.70 | -6.42 |
| Crystal Yield, % | | | |
| Out pan | 31.95 | 37.12 | 26.99 |
| Out crystallizer | 35.61 | 42.32 | 31.45 |

**Examination Of The Causes Of Difficult-To-Boil Massecuite** *Mary An Godshall, Emmanuel Duffaut, Sara Moore and Ron Triche, Sugar Processing Research Institute, Inc., New Orleans, LA*

This study examined the characteristics of difficult to boil massecuites and compared them to normal boiling massecuites. The study consisted of two parts: (1) Chemical analysis of a representative set of A molasses that spanned the 2002 grinding season, including normal boiling and difficult boiling samples; (2) treatment of massecuites with various chemical additives, used as "molecular probes" to determine their effect on the boiling profiles in the laboratory. Chemical characterization included: pH, Brix, ash, total polysaccharides, starch, dextran, oligosaccharides, mannitol, phosphate, calcium, lactic acid, sucrose, glucose and fructose.

Preliminary results suggest that the hard-to-boil (HTB) phenomenon may have more than one cause. Indicators of poor boiling massecuites are high polysaccharide and dextran levels, high calcium, low phosphate, higher lactic acid, lower invert (due to destructive reactions) and a lower glucose/fructose ratio (indication of Maillard reaction that is preferentially destructive to glucose). Some results are summarized in Table 1. Two sources of HTB appear to be: (a) situations that result in high calcium in syrup and molasses and low natural phosphate in juice; and (b) situations that result in very high polysaccharide and dextran concentrations. Starch, which can be very high, was not a factor. Ash, oligosaccharides and mannitol concentration were not significant. The different causes of HTB may explain why additives, such as soda ash or surfactants, will perform well in one case and not in another.

The need to use extra lime for clarification due to high mud and polysaccharide levels, along with a low natural phosphate in the juice, can lead to high calcium carrying through the process. It is known that calcium will have a deleterious effect on crystallization. Excess calcium in syrups and A-molasses could arise from the presence of acids that form soluble calcium salts, such as acetic, propionic and lactic acids, which are indicators of deteriorated cane. These acids can form instead of dextran, resulting in problem massecuites with low dextran levels. During evaporation, some of these soluble complexes are broken and the acids evaporate off, resulting in the higher pH levels seen in HTB molasses.

Boiling experiments with additives chosen for their various properties was undertaken with the idea that these compounds could act as "molecular probes" providing information about the mechanisms involved in HTB. The compounds used were EDTA (a calcium chelator), ammonium bisulfite (a reducing agent), hydrogen peroxide (an oxidizing agent), soda ash (decreases calcium solubility), urea (breaks hydrogen bonds), sodium dodecylsulfate (anionic surfactant), and hydrochloric acid. The most effective of these treatments were hydrochloric acid and hydrogen peroxide. Soda ash had variable effects. Typical results are shown in Figures 1 and 2. Most of the additives showed, in general, a positive improvement in boiling, although some samples were not affected by any treatment.

Table 1. Comparison of constituents in molasses: Normal boiling vs poor boiling.

| Type | pH | ppm Dextran | % Invert | G/F | % Ash | ppm Ca | ppm $PO_4$ | ppm Lactic | ppm Polys |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Normal | 6.10 | 3250 | 11.38 | 0.91 | 7.44 | 8,279 | 298 | 845 | 9,943 |
| Poor | 6.39 | 4638 | 9.57 | 0.84 | 7.55 | 11,458 | 150 | 1144 | 11,582 |
| Ratio* | 1.05 | 1.43 | 0.84 | 0.92 | 1.01 | 1.38 | 0.50 | 1.35 | 1.17 |

Results are based on brix refractometer solids
G/F = glucose/fructose ratio; ratios <1 indicate glucose destruction in Maillard reactions.
* Ratio of poor/normal

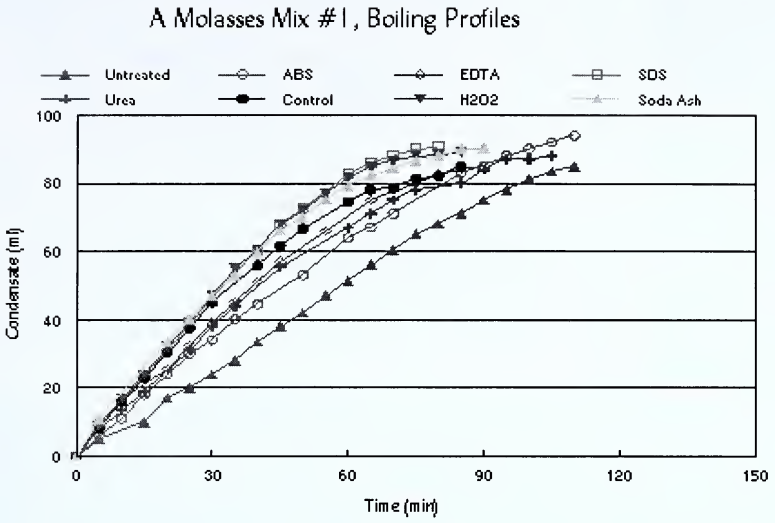


Figure 1. Boiling profiles of A-molasses with additives. Filled triangles (bottom line) are untreated molasses (nothing added). Filled circles represent a control of refined sugar boiled under the same conditions. Soda ash, ammonium bisulfite and hydrogen peroxide improved the boiling to the level of the control. All the additives improved boiling over the untreated original.

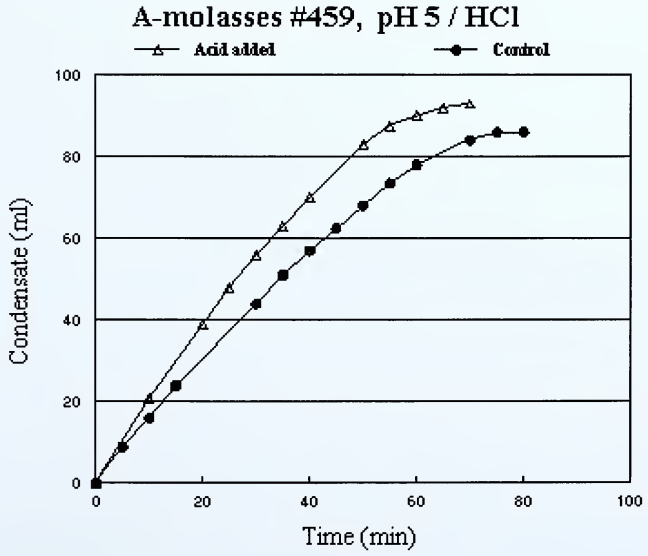


Figure 2. Boiling profile of a poor-boiling A-molasses showing the effect of adding hydrochloric acid on the profile. No sucrose was lost under these conditions.

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# Louisiana
# Smoke Management Guidelines for Sugarcane Harvesting

All growers should have attended the Certified Burn Manager Program. The list below are the steps you should take when burning.

**Step 1. Identify Smoke Sensitive Areas**
**Step 2. Obtain Fire Weather Forecast**
**Step 3. Develop a Prescribed Burn Plan**
**Step 4. Determine Smoke Category Day**
**Step 5. Determine Smoke and Ash Screening Distance**
**Step 6. Determine Direction of Smoke and Ash Plume**
**Step 7. Evaluate the Prescribed Burn Results**
**Step 8. Keep good harvest records**

If you have misplaced your copy or would like additional copies, contact the League office or your county agent.

The League staff wishes to remind all growers that although these guidelines are voluntary, it is vitally important that burning operations be conducted in as efficient a manner as possible in order to manage smoke and ash and reduce their impact on the public.

The future of cane burning depends upon the successful incorporation of these guidelines into your farming operation.

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Classified ads in *The Sugar Bulletin* are for dues paying growers only. There is no charge for these classifieds. However, the guidelines are as follows:

1. Ads must be typed and mailed to The Sugar Bulletin, P. O. Drawer 938, Thibodaux, LA 70302-0938 no later than the 12th day of the month prior to the issue date in which it will be placed.

2. There will be a 10 item limit with only farm equipment listed.

3. Ads will be placed for two months at a time only. If you wish to run for another two months, please call the League office at (985) 448-3707 prior to the due date.

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**Volume 82, No. 2** **November 2003**

# THE SUGAR BULLETIN

**Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A.**

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**The mission of the American Sugar Cane League is to sustain success through effective research, positive legislation, public relations/promotion, and education.**

# The Sugar Bulletin

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  - ❖ **11 x 20 NDT Tire $85**
  - ❖ **These tires can also mount on 18-wheel trailers with a used rim**
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# UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Charlie Melancon

## Disaster - CAFTA
## Louisiana Bankers Association & First South Farm Credit
## Mike Salassi

Well, finally! That's about all I can say about the long awaited delivery of the Disaster Payments to the Louisiana industry. It isn't often that I get to put an issue to bed and to sleep. But, for the most part, I am thinking that this may be one I can scratch off of the list as done.

I do have two regrets. The first is the matter of growers who made business structure changes, only, and were deprived of the ability to use their best year of production, thus unknowingly causing them to not take full advantage of the disaster assistance, even though they had qualified in all other ways. The leadership of the League has discussed this matter on a number of occasions, and with the League's legal counsel, Paul Borron. Unfortunately, there is no "legal standing" for the League to pursue. USDA's Willie Cooper was very understanding and concerned when we brought this matter to him. He pursued it with USDA officials. I am told that his superiors referred it to not one attorney in the department, but to three. Subsequently, the Regional Office of General Counsel for the USDA issued a directive to the State Director that provided that USDA would follow its policy as it regards this issue of name changes. That is where the League, regrettably, ran out of options, and it became each claimant for him or herself. For those of you who are faced with this dilemma, I wish you best of luck and please know that my wish for you is to reach a satisfactory resolve. The options of appealing or filing suit appear to be the only avenue still available at this time. I and the Board wish there were more that could be done to help.

The second item that the industry wanted, and was not able to secure was a threshold of a 10% loss in order to qualify for disaster payments. Again, this change in what was requested by the industry was ignored by the OMB (Office of Management and Budget ). You may remember my article from last month commending Congressman Tauzin and his Legislative Assistant James White for their efforts in this matter. They spent much time and energy trying to sway OMB, but to no avail. However, what they did accomplish was a compromise at 20% loss to qualify, which is way better than the 35% threshold that is the norm for all other commodities, and the threshold that the beet industry had to settle for in their disaster package.

While it was the League's wish that we could have gotten enough money to help every farmer that sustained any loss, that was never a real possibility because of budget deficits and the very fact that it would have taken $3-500 million to accomplish the task. Again, I am thankful to the entire Louisiana delegation and our other friends on the hill that helped in our effort.

**CAFTA**

As we move away from the WTO Ministerial in Cancun, Mexico and get closer to the CAFTA-US negotiation in Houston, Texas starting on the 20th of October, the League and the US Sugar industry have still not received a decision from the White House to allow sugar's tariff to be exempt in this and future bilateral agreements. Charles Thibaut and I, along with Don Wallace and Macon Edwards visited with the Louisiana Congressional delegation in early October to discuss our concerns, the impact of our being included, and to ask for their intervention on our behalf. Needless to say, the entire delegation was supportive as they have always been and, in fact, were circulating a letter to the USTR and a copy to the White House on the issue. At least eight Republican governors, including our own, Governer and Lt. Governer, Kathleen Blanco wrote letters to the White House on our behalf. In fact, Mike Foster called the White House at least twice to discuss the issue and express his concern. The week of the twentieth will have passed by the time you read this, and hopefully we will have been successful in dodging another bullet. I will send out an email to the Board, mills and the email group as soon as we know something. This is a very critical issue and one that deserves a little prayer to back up the politics.

**Louisiana Bankers Association & First South Farm Credit**

Speaking of the issue of asking to have our tariff exempt from the CAFTA and future bilateral agreements . . . the Louisiana Bankers Assoc. (based in Baton Rouge) and First South Farm Credit (based in Jackson, MS) engaged Mike Salassi of the LSU AgCenter and LSU Ag Economics to analyze the "Impact of Potential Bilateral Free Trade Agreements on Projected Raw Sugar Prices and the Economic Viability of the Louisiana Sugar Industry." They commissioned the study after hearing of our concern with the CAFTA. An Executive Summary of the report is contained in this issue of the Bulletin. The two organizations distributed this document to our Congressional delegation, and subsequently the US sugar industry's Washington reps distributed it on Capital Hill. The results were what we as an industry perceived they might be, and our dilemma weighted heavy on many of our friends on the Hill which has caused them to make contact and apply pressure on the White House and the USTR's office. Such a study coming from the League or the Sugar Alliance may have looked suspicious to outside observers, but coming from the people who have a heavy financial stake in the Louisiana sugar industry as lenders, it was accepted as objective, and rightfully so. My real hope is that we will not have to face the reality of inclusion as depicted in the study. If you have a loan or any contact with either of these groups, a call, a thank you note or email for their concern for the health and welfare of our industry would not be out of line. In fact, if you borrow money from a local bank in your home town, you might just thank your loan officer for being a member of the LA Bankers Association. If your bank is not a member, you might suggest they join. The contacts with these organizations are Peter Gwaltney (gwaltney@lba.org - Ph. 225-387-3282 ) of Louisiana Bankers and Steve Rochelle, CEO and Sells Newman VP of Government Relations for First South Farm Credit (snewman@firstsouthfarmcredit.com or Ph-601-946-0340).

**Mike Salassi**

Included in this issue is the executive brief prepared by Mike Salasssi and printed with his and the Louisiana Bankers Association and First South Farm Credit Associaiton's permission. I again express my gratitude to both organizations. Additionally, I would wish to thank Mike Salassi for his work with the USDA folks, whom I also wish to thank, on getting all the data compiled and processed so that the disaster assistance money could be distributed. Both Mike, Willie Cooper and his USDA-FSA people worked hard to ensure that everything ran as smoothly as possible.

# WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

## Agricultural Appropriations Idled by CR and Iraq
## LA Bankers Study/Congressional Meetings Show Dangers Of CAFTA
## USDA Allotment/Allocation Announcement
## USDA WASDE October Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The agricultural appropriations package remains on the sidelines in the Senate after both Houses of Congress approved a continuing resolution in late September to keep various government agencies in business through the month of October. In addition, the House and Senate approved appropriations bills for Defense, Homeland Security and the Legislative Branch that were signed by the President. The House and Senate have been focused on supplemental funding for the Iraqi reconstruction in the early days of October and will likely approve another continuing resolution, containing agriculture and 9 other appropriations packages, later this month.

**LA Bankers Study/Congressional Meetings Show Dangers Of CAFTA**

Two Louisiana banking groups released a report in early October that underscores the dangers of negotiating sugar provisions in the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA). The report, prepared by economists at the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center and requested by the Louisiana Bankers Association and First South Farm Credit Association, noted that the US is currently negotiating free trade agreements with a number of countries and that these countries, collectively, export nearly 28 million metric tons of sugar. The CAFTA countries (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua) have the capability to export 2 million metric tons. The study indicates that an increase in US imports to accommodate CAFTA exports of 2 million metric tons (as compared to the current TRQ allocations for those countries totaling 126,365 tons) would result in a 50 percent reduction in US producer prices for sugar, driving that price down to less than 12 cents per pound. This price reduction would have a devastating impact on Louisiana producers, who require 16.9 cents per pound to cover total production costs, and such prices would have a direct and devastating impact on the financial position of the various first-processors in the state.

The US House delegation from Louisiana wrote Ambassador Robert Zoellick, US Trade Representative, in early October to request close consultations on the Administration's sugar position ahead of the next round of CAFTA

negotiations in Houston in late October. USTR's agricultural negotiator, Allen Johnson, had a frank, face-to-face meeting with the Louisiana House delegation immediately prior to the CAFTA negotiations, underscoring the importance of this issue to Louisiana. Nineteen US Senators, led by Senator John Breaux (D-LA) and Senator Larry Craig (R-ID) wrote the President on October 17 to express strong opposition to any plans to include sugar tariffs and TRQ's in the bilateral and regional FTA's.

**USDA Allotment/Allocation Announcement**

On September 30, 2003, USDA announced the sugar loan rate (18.44 cents per pound, raw value, for Louisiana) and the marketing allotments and allocations for the 2003/04 crop year. In making the announcement, USDA effectively created a 300,000 short tons, raw value, reserve from the previously announced Overall Allotment Quantity (OAQ) of 8.550 million short tons, raw value (STRV) by allocating only 96.5 percent of that total OAQ. This decision would seem to reflect an appreciation for the concerns expressed by the industry in the mid-September letter signed by all of the Louisiana processors, along with a majority of the mills nationwide. This letter urged the Department to reserve a portion of the OAQ to ensure that the UnderSecretary has the tools needed to act as a moderating influence in the market.

While withholding 300,000 STRV of the total 8.550 million ton OAQ, USDA allocated 4.484 million STRV to the beet sector and 3.766 million STRV to the cane sector. Louisiana received 1,411,954 STRV of the cane total, including 2,266 STRV from a reallocation of the Puerto Rican allotment, with the individual processor allocations as follows:

Alma (75,891), Caire&Graugnard (3,303), Cajun (100,796), Cora-Texas (126,803), Harry Laws (60,208), Iberia (68,147), Jeanerette (65,848), Lafourche (72,663), LA Sugarcane Coop (87,624), Lula Westfield (158,825), M.A. Patout (390,185), St. Mary (95,873), So. LA Sugars Coop (105,789)

**USDA WASDE October Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released**

The USDA released its October World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. Projected U.S. sugar production for fiscal year 2002/03 was increased to 8,408,000 from 8,386,000 short tons (raw value) in September, reflecting an increase in beet production to 4,422,000 from 4,397,000 short tons last month. Cane production was unchanged at 3,986,000. Louisiana production for 2002/03 was raised slightly to 1,389,000 from 1,386,000 in September. 2002/03 total imports were again increased to 1,713,000 from 1,679,000 short tons last month. Imports under TRQ were lowered to 1,200,000 from 1,214,000 short tons last month. Total supply was increased to 11,401,000 from 11,346,000 short tons. 2002/03 exports were unchanged at 140,000 short tons. Ending stocks were increased to 1,758,999 from 1,691,000 in September, driving the 2002/03 ending stocks-to-use ratio upward to 18.2 percent from 17.5 percent in September.

2003/04 production was raised to 8,847,000 from 8,812,000 short tons in September, with beet production rising to 4,667,000 from 4,651,000 and cane production rising to 4,180,000 from 4,161,000 in September. Louisiana cane sugar production was increased slightly to 1,585,000 from 1,558,000 short tons in September. The higher beginning stocks and the production increase drove 2003/04 total supply to 12,187,000 from 12,087,000 short tons in September. Exports were increased by 10,000 to 160,000 short tons while other uses remained constant, resulting in an increase in total uses to 10,085,000 from 10,075,000 short tons. Ending stocks were increased to 2,102,000 from 2,012,000 short tons in September, resulting in an increase in the stocks-to-use ratio to 20.8 percent from 20 percent last month.

# ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

## Crop Report - Weigh-Boy - ISSCT Mechanization Workshop

During the first two weeks of harvest, many growers were reporting disappointing yields. Fields that were being harvested at this time were yielding about 3 to 4 tons less than expected. Most growers were harvesting their worst cane, that is, fields on clay-soils, fields of old-stubble, and fields that were treated very early with Polado. Also, these fields were for the most part rutted during the previous harvest, and therefore they were poorly drained during the winter as well as during the growing season. LCP 85-384 did not respond well to these waterlogged soils. To add insult to injury and during the peak growing months, fields in the New Iberia - Loreauville area suffered through a drought, receiving little rain in the months of July and August. During the first couple of weeks of harvest, many growers in this area along the Teche were reporting yields in the teens; some yields as low as fourteen to fifteen tons per acre. In discussions with a couple of growers who had harvested more than 200 acres, they reported averages of only nineteen tons. As history has proven in heavy clay soils, old stubble of LCP 85-384 does not produce well under extreme environmental conditions of either too wet or too dry. The only good point is that these low tonnages are accompanied by high sugar per ton of cane. Many growers are reporting daily averages of 200 or more pounds of sugar per ton of cane. Even with the extremely high sugar content the production of these low yielding fields is still less than 4000 pounds of sugar per acre and with the high production costs of today, these low yields are not profitable. Reports coming from other growers harvesting lighter textured soils along the river and the "other bayou" are somewhat better, with growers reporting ranges of 28 to 32 tons per acre. Again, the sugar in Polado treated cane is around the 200-pound level, which is about 30 pounds higher than non-treated cane.

Now that fields of the older stubbles have been harvested, growers are reporting an increase in their tonnage and continue to report high sugar per ton of cane. However, mills are reporting, after surveying their growers that if these ideal harvest conditions (dry weather) continue through the rest of harvest and the yields of cane per acre do not increase significantly, harvest will be completed before the end of December.

**Weigh-Boy**

In an effort to reduce the number of over or under loaded trucks sent to the mill, at least three growers in the Bunkie - Cheneyville area have purchased portable scales that can be setup at loading stations. These scales are manufactured by Ferree Trailer and sold under the WEIGH-BOY trade name (Figure 1) and have been in use by the logging industry for a number of years. Because of their compactness and rather lightweight, 3000 lbs., the scales are easily moved from loading sight to loading sight. With little trouble, they can be loaded on the same trailer that is used to move the harvester from location to locations.

At the writing of this article, Jim and Ross Harper from Cheneyville have been using one of these scales for about three weeks, and they are very impressed with its accuracy. As can be seen

in the accompanying photos they have a "dog-house" (Figure 2) setup to keep the printer and electronic gear out of the weather. The procedure is to weigh each axle or set of axles and by adding these weights together the total weight of the truck and trailer can be determined. With a transloader setup nearby, cane can be added to the trailer if more weight is needed or cane can be removed if the load is too heavy. The Harpers report, only a 600 to 700 pounds difference between what they record at the loading sight and what is recorded at the mill scale. They also report that they are able to maximize each trailer sent to the mill, and that on the average they are sending two tons more in each truck. The cost of the scale is less than $13,000, and the Harpers are of the opinion that in the long run the scales will be worth every penny. More information about these scales can be found at www.ferreetrailers.com.

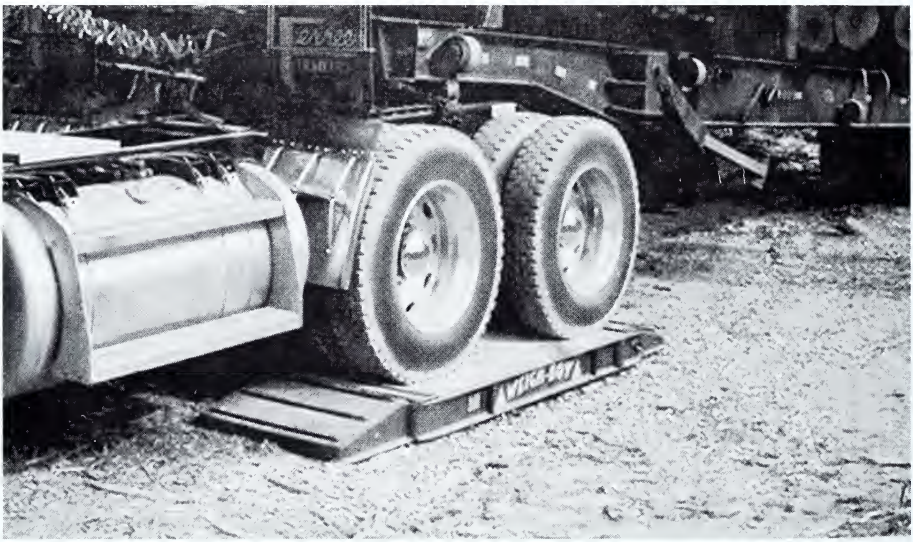

**Figure 1.**

**Figure 2.**

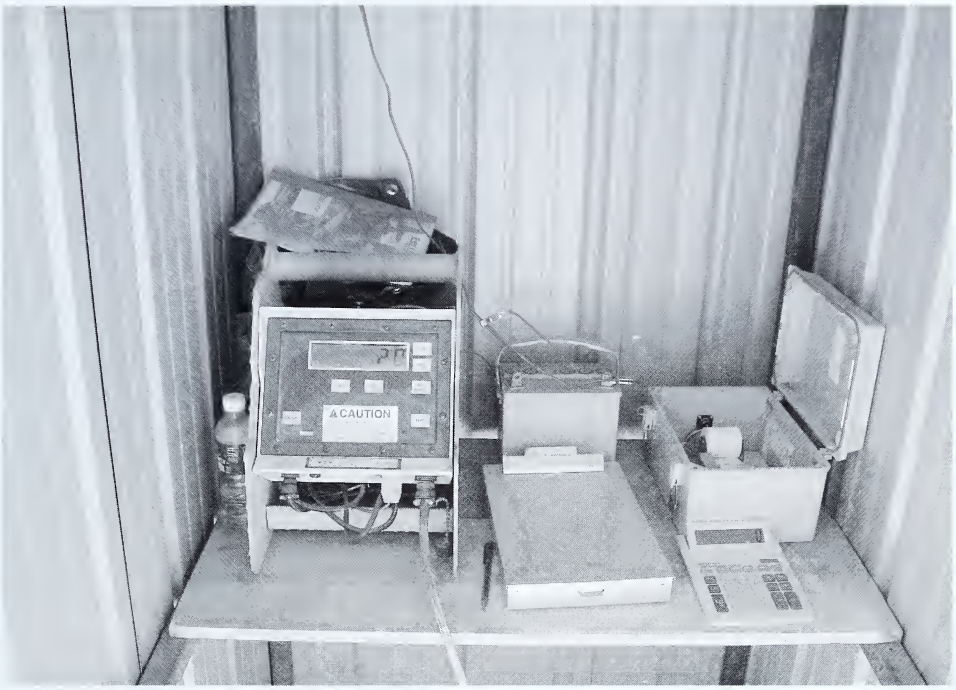


**Figure 3.**

**ISSCT Mechanization Workshop**

During the week of October 12 – 17, 2003 the American Sugar Cane League in conjunction with the Louisiana Division of the ASSCT sponsored an international mechanization workshop. The venue for the workshop was Thibodaux. There were fifty-two delegates from thirteen different sugar-producing countries. All of the delegates came together to share their research data and practical information regarding cane harvest (burn/green), mulch management, the production of cane, and the ever-changing environmental and social pressures on cane production. The Local Organizing Committee for the ISSCT Mechanization Workshop would like to thank all of those who helped to sponsor a very successful workshop. Also, thanks are given to those in our industry who participated by giving of their time and by providing demonstrations for the attending delegates. The following is a list of the commercial organizations that provided sponsorship of the workshop:

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# CANE BURNING LITIGATION- THE IMPORTANCE OF RECORD KEEPING

By John F. Gay

*Editor's Note: Record keeping is a very important part of your job as a Louisiana Sugar Cane Farmer. Because of this importance, I have asked John Gay to write the following article to share with you his experience of this important activity in your everyday farming. After reading this, I hope that all of you take the time to keep good records of your farming operation.*

In September of 1999 our company was sued as a result of our practice of cane burning. The unexpected suit was initiated by an asthma sufferer who, one year earlier on Oct. 14, 1998, was hospitalized with an asthma attack. This began nearly four years of legal twists and turns, the ordeal culminating with a week long jury trial in the Eighteenth Judicial District Court held in Plaquemine during July 2003.

The plaintiff claimed that on the day of her hospitalization she had been working in her yard when she noticed soot and ash falling around her. Her husband, a house painter, claimed he was also working at home on cabinet doors for a customer when ash began falling on his paint job. He claimed to have driven to look for the source of the ash while his wife continued to do the yard work. Although their property is located almost five miles from our farm he stated that he followed the ash plume to a field adjacent to our farm shop. He took pictures of a burning field, focusing his camera so to include in the pictures buildings on our property adjacent to the field. He stated in the trial that the pictures were evidence for him to make a claim against us for damages to his paint job.

Later that afternoon the wife had an asthma attack. Despite self treatment with an inhaler, she became seriously ill and was rushed to the emergency room that night by her husband, arriving there unconscious. Thankfully, because of the skills and quick response of the emergency room staff, she was resuscitated. The seriousness of the attack caused her to remain in the hospital for five days and accumulate sizable medical bills.

Fortunately, our company had liability coverage with a well established insurance company within the state. We contacted them after being served with court papers nearly one year later, and informed them of the details as we knew them. The insurance company assigned a very capable attorney who began preparing a case for our defense. The attorney first asked for our records of fields burned on October 14, 1998. Of course, like most farmers in 1998, we did not keep records of fields burned during harvest. We did, however, keep a spread sheet of yield records on each field including the date harvested, the variety, the year, etc. This information became invaluable to our defense.

During the discovery process leading up to the trial, the plaintiffs' attorney hired investigators to go door to door. These investigators were seeking specific negative experiences by people

in the surrounding area concerning our burning of cane. They also asked if these neighbors had ever complained directly to any owner or employee of our company about our practice of cane burning. Additionally, advertisements were placed in the Plaquemine and Baton Rouge newspapers by the attorneys seeking the same information from readers throughout a wider area. These were obviously attempts to move this litigation into a class action status.

Requests for information on every facet of our operation seemed to never end. We spent many hours and days compiling this information. The plaintiffs requested all of our financial statements and tax returns for a five year period. Our defense attorney attempted to block this request by appealing to the court. First the district court denied our attempt to block this request, followed by the court of appeals, and finally in a split decision the Louisiana Supreme Court voted to require us to turn over the information. This ruling was a significant loss for our side.

After almost four years from the time we were initially sued, the case finally went to court on July 28, 2003. A jury of twelve people was selected, and expert witnesses were called from such places as South Carolina and British Columbia. These experts represented a wide variety of disciplines to include: pulmonology, psychology, nursing, family medicine, meteorology, agronomy, agricultural economics, accounting, and social work. A great number of resources were brought to bear by both sides as everyone recognized the precedent setting nature of the case.

During the week long trial, testimony was given to establish timelines for the day the wife was admitted to the hospital. The husband claimed to have taken the pictures of the burning field on that day at around noon, however, there was no date printed on his pictures. Our yield records showed the field in the pictures was harvested over a week later on October 22 and 23. Normal procedure would have us burn that field one day earlier on October 21. Without these written records the jury would have accepted the husband's testimony. Instead, a great deal of doubt was cast on the plaintiffs' entire case.

After five days of trial the jury deliberated for only one hour. They returned a unanimous verdict in our favor.

There are many lessons to be learned through this experience, for our company, and the whole Louisiana sugar industry. Important among them is the realization that trial lawyers and members of the general public are willing to spend great amounts of money to stop the burning of cane. Farmers and mill operators together must recognize this threat and take every precaution to minimize it. Smoke management guidelines have been developed for the cane industry. For our individual protection and the protection of the entire industry, we must follow these guidelines and record every step of our burning operations. Accurate record keeping is vital. Before you light the match be conscious of the impact the burn will have down wind. We need to police ourselves before the courts or the legislature do the policing for us.

We are all fortunate and privileged to have access to liability insurance coverage at reasonable rates. We cannot take this coverage for granted. The careless actions of one farmer can cause all farmers to loose this vital coverage.

I cannot thank enough those defense witnesses who gave so much time and effort toward this victory. I am also grateful to our insurance company Farm Bureau Insurance for the decision to go to trial rather than settling out of court. Our attorneys Stacey Moak and Associates did an excellent job of defending us and deserve a great deal of thanks as well.

Let this experience be a lesson to us all and let us work together by following the smoke management guidelines to protect our legal right to burn cane.

# Impact of Increased Sugar Imports from Potential Free Trade Agreements on Raw Sugar Prices

*Michael Salassi, Lynn Kennedy and Janis Breaux*
*LSU AgCenter*

The United States is currently involved in several international trade negotiations with countries desiring to establish some type of free trade agreement (FTA) with this country. Some of the specific free trade agreements being negotiated include the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), the South African Customs Union (SACU), Thailand, and Australia. Several of the countries involved in these negotiations are major sugar producers and major sugar exporters (Table 1). This article presents an analysis of the projected potential levels of U.S. raw sugar prices received by Louisiana sugarcane growers under various levels of additional sugar importation.

Sugarcane production in Louisiana is important to the U.S. sugar industry as well as to the agricultural economy of Louisiana. In 2001, sugarcane was grown on 493,773 acres by 773 producers in 24 Louisiana parishes. The total value of the 2001 Louisiana sugarcane crop was valued at $619,700,125, far exceeding the total values of other major row crops produced in the state (cotton $292,234,433; rice $216,154,845; soybeans $101,929,344).

Financial institutions in South Louisiana have an important relationship to the Louisiana sugar industry, providing investment and operating capital to both sugarcane growers and processors. Data collected from a sample of lending institutions with operations in South Louisiana indicated that the current volume of loans to sugarcane growers and mills in the state totaled $112.7 million and $198.3 million, respectively. Together, these financial institutions had a total of over $300 million in current outstanding loans to the Louisiana sugar industry, with debt service dependent on stable, supported domestic sugar prices.

The Louisiana sugarcane industry is also an important and vital part in the U.S. sugar industry. In 2003, Louisiana is projected to harvest 49 percent of U.S. sugarcane acreage, accounting for an estimated 41 percent of total U.S. sugarcane production. Over the 1995/96 to 2002/03 crop years, Louisiana sugar production has represented approximately 30 to 40 percent of total U.S. cane sugar production and 15 to 20 percent of total U.S. beet and cane sugar production.

The oversupply situation of 1999 illustrated the price sensitive nature of the U.S. sugar market. Even with domestic marketing allotments in place, the magnitude of potentially higher sugar imports, possible from current trade negotiations, could have significant consequences for the U.S. sugar industry, including sugarcane production in Louisiana.

An international trade model was utilized to evaluate the impact on U.S. sugar prices as a result of increased sugar imports due to potential future free trade agreements being enacted. With a base U.S. raw sugar price of 22.92 cents per pound, a 1.0 million metric ton increase in imports resulted in a raw sugar price decrease to 16.57 cents per pound, a decline of 27.7 percent (Table 2). A 3.0 million metric ton increase in U.S. sugar imports was estimated to cause U.S. raw sugar prices to decrease to 8.41 cents per pound, a decline of 63.3 percent. These prices are well below the 19 to 20 cent market prices needed for Louisiana sugarcane growers to cover total costs. These additional import levels pale in comparison to the 27.7 million metric ton sugar export volumes of countries currently negotiating free trade agreements with the United States.

**Table 1 -** Potential U.S. Free Trade Agreement (FTA) Countries/Regions: Sugar Production and Exports, 2001/02 – 2003/04 Average, and Share of U.S. Raw Sugar Import Quota, 2002/03

| Countries/Regions | Production | Exports | U.S. TRQ Allocation |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | -Metric Tons- | |
| FTAA TOTAL<br>(% OF U.S. TRQ) | 38,310,000 | 17,368,000 | 715,499<br>(64.0%) |
| FTA Total<br>(% of U.S. TRQ) | 52,562,000 | 27,277,000 | 858,715<br>(76.9%) |

**Table 2** – Estimated Impact of Additional U.S. Sugar Imports on World and U.S. Raw Sugar Prices

| Additional U.S. Sugar Imports | Estimated World Raw Sugar Price [1] | Estimated U.S. Raw Sugar Price [2] |
|---|---|---|
| *(metric tons)* | *(¢ / lb)* | *(¢ / lb)* |
| 0 | 7.70 | 22.92 |
| 100,000 | 7.71 | 22.20 |
| 500,000 | 7.74 | 19.51 |
| 750,000 | 7.76 | 17.99 |
| 1,000,000 | 7.78 | 16.57 |
| 1,500,000 | 7.82 | 14.05 |
| 2,000,000 | 7.86 | 11.87 |
| 3,000,000 | 7.93 | 8.41 |


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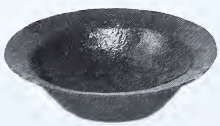

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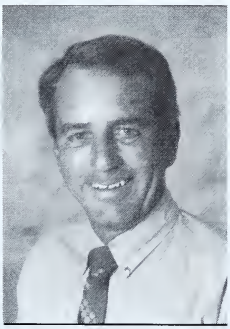

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# THE BATON ROUGE LINE

By Tom Spradley
Spradley and Spradley

## Governer's Race - Legislative Results

It is hard to figure out who is most amazed with the results of the primary election for Governor, the people of Louisiana or the rest of the Nation. A runoff between a cajun female and an American born, East Indian for the governorship of Louisiana has turned heads all across the country and speaks well for the voters of our state.

Apparently the voters felt free to vote unconventionally. Louisiana voters have made political decisions in the shadow of Huey, Earl and Edwin for most of the last century and for the first time in forty years did not have Edwin Edwards or a black candidate on the ballot. The result was tainted by a paltry turnout, less than fifty per cent, but the two left standing were the leaders during the stretch run and there were no big revolts or surprises.

Bobby Jindal (R) held the most momentum going in to the runoff as his numbers continued to climb from the beginning and he finished with the largest vote. Kathleen Blanco (D) was the front runner from almost a year ago and in the end held off a furious campaign from fellow democrats to take away her supporters.

Political pundits agree that in the finals turnout is key. A high turnout favors Blanco, they say, and a low turnout favors Jindal. The primary voter particpation was under fifty percent which is one of the lowest in a statewide election, ever. Not boding well for Blanco is the fact that there are not many runoffs remaining at the local level and only the State Insurance Commissioner's race statewide to inspire voters to turn out.

A negative factor for Jindal is that in the primary there were quite a few more votes for democrats than there were for republicans. Another factor is that historically large slates of candidates tend to discourage voters from going to the polls, as counter-intuitive as that sounds, and larger numbers show when the field narrows.

**Legislative Results**

In the state Senate Jon Johnson (D-New Orleans) failed to win in the primary but he led challenger Ann Duplessis by 49% to 36%. It is never good news to an incumbent to have to face a runoff, but Johnson was close to winning outright.

Five incumbent Senators did not run for reelection and Rep. Ben Nevers (D-Bougalousa) won Senator Jerry Thomas' seat. Sherrie Smith Creek from Shreveport will replace her old boss Ron Bean. There are runoffs in St. Bernard, Ascension and Caddo parishes.

Two incumbent Senators were sent home. Senator Bill Jones (D- Ruston) lost a close race to Republican Bob Kostelka and Senator Fred Hoyt lost by a surprising margin of 54/46 to Nick Gautreaux. Now there are more Gautreauxs in the Senate than there are Joneses or Smiths.

In the House of Representatives there are seven runoffs with incumbents. Sugar growing area races include a run for Hunt Downer's seat between Gordon Dove and Tom Watkins who got 34% and 31% respectively. Juba Diez from Gonzales is locked in a struggle with Eddie Lambert, who is retiring State Senator Louis Lambert's nephew. Diez is a long time House member with over 20 years of service, and is the current Transportation Committtee Chairman. Also fighting for her political life is Emma Devillier who faces Karen St. Germain in the race in West Baton Rouge and Iberville parishes. St. Germain led Devillier by a tally of 48% to 40% in the first round.

In somewhat of a surprise, sugar belt Representative Greg Fruge, a republican from Eunice was upset by democrat Mickey Guillory, also from Eunice by a score of 52% to 48%.

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# Louisiana
# Smoke Management Guidelines for Sugarcane Harvesting

All growers should have attended the Certified Burn Manager Program. The list below are the steps you should take when burning.

**Step 1. Identify Smoke Sensitive Areas**
**Step 2. Obtain Fire Weather Forecast**
**Step 3. Develop a Prescribed Burn Plan**
**Step 4. Determine Smoke Category Day**
**Step 5. Determine Smoke and Ash Screening Distance**
**Step 6. Determine Direction of Smoke and Ash Plume**
**Step 7. Evaluate the Prescribed Burn Results**
**Step 8. Keep good harvest records**

If you have misplaced your copy or would like additional copies, contact the League office or your county agent.

The League staff wishes to remind all growers that although these guidelines are voluntary, it is vitally important that burning operations be conducted in as efficient a manner as possible in order to manage smoke and ash and reduce their impact on the public.

The future of cane burning depends upon the successful incorporation of these guidelines into your farming operation.

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**Volume 82, No. 3** **December 2003**

# THE SUGAR BULLETIN

**Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A.**

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**The mission of the American Sugar Cane League is to sustain success through effective research, positive legislation, public relations/promotion, and education.**

# The Sugar Bulletin

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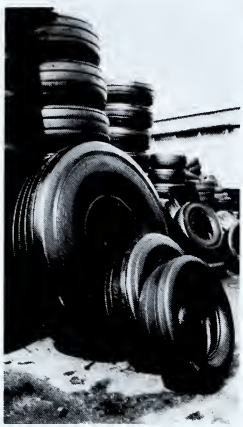

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EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

# UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Charlie Melancon

## CAFTA - Good Weather - Disaster Funds

**What's On the Front Burner This Week** should actually be the name of this column as the "issue" landscape continues to offer this industry and me no dull moments. I wonder occasionally what it might be like to have some time to have a "free" thought on something other than sugar. It has been like grinding season here at the League office, year round and for quite some time. Never a dull moment!

I recognize that this CAFTA matter may have suddenly appeared, at least in the minds of some out there in our industry. But, to be quite frank, it is something that your leadership and the leadership of the other sectors of the US industry have been discussing and maneuvering on for a number of months. While we were getting some encouraging expressions of " not to worry," that in fact is what gave us reason to worry. This was not and is not about any election or candidate in an election. The timing, which is controlled by the US-CAFTA negotiators and not us, was the defining point of why this issue surfaced when it did. In fact, October 20, 2003 when the USTR and the CAFTA negotiators met in Houston and sugar was placed on the negotiating table against the industry's wishes, actually defined the moment that your leadership had to make some serious decisions of whether to sit quietly by and see if things swung our way further along in the process, are should we begin to make sure that those in whose hands our future lies should know exactly how we feel. The latter option was the option of choice for your leadership.

This CAFTA and all bi-lateral agreements in the future are and will be the undoing and destruction of this viable sugar industry. If the Louisiana and US sugar industry were not competitive, I could well understand how some of these officials and bureaucrats might think that it will be either now or later that we suffer a great demise. But, since that is not the issue here, I would rather be caught kicking and fighting to the end, if that is in fact what this Administration has in mind for us. And, I am watching and hoping for any and all signs that they are listening and might be in agreement with our position. Until then, I continue to ask each and everyone of you to call or fax the White House, ask your neighbors, friends and relatives to do the same, and don't let up until there is a "public" announcement from the White House that we will be left out of the CAFTA and all future bilateral negotiations. There is no other option!

Call the White House at 202 - 456-1111, or fax the following message to the White House at 202-456-2461.

"Take the sugar tariff off of the CAFTA and bilateral negotiating table."

As of this time, the next drop-dead date for our issue is the week of December 8-12, 2003. This is supposed to be the final negotiating session for the CAFTA agreement. It would surely be a wonderful Christmas present to everyone if an official who speaks for the White House would announce that sugar is off the table and we will be allowed to go to the WTO level to multi-laterally negotiate sugar tariffs and other support for sugar worldwide.

**Good Weather**

After last year's harvest with all the adverse weather conditions our growers suffered through, I thank the good lord for giving us this year's favorable conditions. I am "knocking on wood" as I write this piece and pray that this good weather continues through the completion of this crop, and for everyone in all areas of the belt. I am also throwing in an additional request, and again knocking on wood, that we don't see any freeze temperatures until we get well into January, at the earliest. I just hope that someone up there is listening.

**Disaster Funds**

By now, I believe everyone should have received his or her disaster assistance money. To those that did not qualify, the leadership of the League and I regret that the rules laid out by the Office of Management and Budget may have caused any of you a hardship. I would have several wishes if I would have the opportunity to redo it, and I surely hope I never have to do this again, which obviously expresses my hope that no one ever has to suffer through another "Harvest from Hell." Our attempt to secure more money, which would have made the job of getting assistance to more injured parties more obtainable, would be my first priority. However, I believe that we were extremely fortunate to obtain the $60 million dollar disaster appropriation that was provided to us by our Congress. Going in and in the early stages of our quest for funds, it was not looking very promising that we would achieve "any" success. That being said, I hope that your League's efforts helped some of you through a disastrous year. There are several appeals still pending with USDA, and upon resolution of these, the final payment from the balance of $4.2 million withheld should be forthcoming.

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# WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

## Agricultural Appropriations
## CAFTA Negotiations Enter Final Stage,
## FTAA meeting in Miami Louisiana Sugar Tour
## USDA WASDE November Report on
## US Sugar Supply and Use Released

At the time of this writing, Congressional leaders were attempting to complete negotiations on an omnibus appropriations package using the agricultural appropriations package deal as the legislative vehicle. It is our understanding that the House language providing funding for construction of new facilities at the Houma station will be included in the final agreement. Congress seems intent on concluding all business prior to the Thanksgiving holidays.

**CAFTA Negotiations Enter Final Stage, FTAA meeting in Miami**

In mid-October, the Louisiana delegation to the US House of Representatives delivered a strong warning to Allen Johnson, Agricultural Negotiator for the US Trade Representative, against the inclusion of sugar tariffs and TRQ's in the CAFTA discussions. Despite this warning, US negotiators tabled a proposal to increase sugar quota volumes to the five countries (Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, Costa Rica and El Salvador) at the Houston meeting on the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) later that month.

As the Administration made plans to provide an offer on tariff reductions for over-quota (Tier 2) imports at the December 9 resumption of talks in Washington, DC, Congressional supporters began to let the Administration know of the potential repercussions of sacrificing the US sugar industry on the altar of free-trade. The sugar members of the Senate Sweetener Caucus, let by Senators John Breaux and Mary Landrieu, met with US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick in mid-November and warned the trade ambassador that inclusion of sugar in the CAFTA would make passage of the trade agreement very difficult. That message was repeated in a second meeting including legislative staff for the interested Caucus members, Washington representatives of sugar interests, and Agricultural Negotiator Allen Johnson in the immediate aftermath of the Louisiana governor's election.

Ambassadors Zoellick and Johnson continue to maintain that sugar is on the table and will remain on the table in these negotiations despite the commitments purportedly made to Congressman Billy Tauzin by the White House. The Administration hopes to complete work on the CAFTA negotiations during the week of December 9, with a goal of informing Congress of intent to entering into a trade agreement in early January. Indications from the Administration are that another trade pact with the Dominican Republic (whose TRQ is larger than the combined TRQ for the five CAFTA nations) will be added to the CAFTA treaty when it is taken to Congress for an up-or-down vote.

Negotiations on the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) resumed in Miami in mid-November with news of a new "opt-out" provision agreed to by the US and Brazil. The details are sketchy, at best, but this new flexibility on the "no exclusions" stance by the White House is an interesting development that we will follow with interest.

**Louisiana Sugar Tour**

Nineteen congressional staff visited Louisiana's sugar producing area in mid-November as a part of our annual fact-finding tour. The staff received extensive briefings on sugar cane research priorities during a November 14 visit to the Houma research facility, and toured the Cameco plant in Thibodaux later that day. Following an industry and trade briefing on Saturday, November 15, the staff viewed harvesting operations at the Laurel Valley Plantation before touring the Raceland Sugars mill. The congressional staff, who play crucial roles in the legislative process in Washington, were unanimous in expressing their appreciation to the League for the informative tour and the hospitality shown during their visit. The participants saw, first-hand, the problems affecting the industry and heard a clear message that CAFTA and the other free trade agreements being explored could mean the death of the US sugar industry. This experience could prove invaluable as Congress takes up CAFTA and the other trade pacts next year.

**USDA WASDE November Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released**

The USDA released its November World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. Projected U.S. sugar production for fiscal year 2002/03 was decreased to 8,378,000 from 8,408,000 short tons (raw value) in October, with beet production falling to 4,415,000 from 4,422,000 short tons last month. Cane production was reduced to 3,963,000 from 3,986,000 short tons in October. Louisiana production for 2002/03 was reduced to 1,369,000 from 1,389,000 in October. 2002/03 total imports were unchanged at 1,713,000 short tons and imports under TRQ were likewise unchanged at 1,200,000 short tons. Total supply was increased to 11,517,000 from 11,401,000 short tons because of higher beginning stocks. 2002/03 exports were increased slightly to 142,000 from 140,000 short tons. Year-end reporting data resulted in an increase in domestic food and beverage use by 271,000 tons, resulting in a reduction of ending stocks 1,305,000 from 1,758,999 in October. This drove the 2002/03 ending stocks-to-use ratio down to 12.8 percent from 18.2 percent in October.

2003/04 production was increased to 8,895,000 from 8,847,000 short tons in October, with beet production rising to 4,720,000 from 4,667,000 and cane production dropping slightly to 4,175,000 from 4,180,000 short tons last month. Louisiana cane sugar production was reduced slightly to 1,578,000 from 1,585,000 short tons in October. The dramatically lower beginning stocks more than offset the production increase, and imports were unchanged at 1,584,000, resulting in a reduction of 2003/04 total supply to 11,784,000 from 12,187,000 short tons in October. Exports were unchanged at 160,000 short tons while other uses were reduced to reflect final 2002/03 processor stocks data, resulting in a decrease in total uses to 9,835,000 from 10,085,000 short tons in October. Ending stocks were decreased to 1,949,000 from 2,102,000 short tons, resulting in a decrease in the stocks-to-use ratio to 19.8 percent from 20.8 percent last month.

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By Windell Jackson

# Crop Report
# Atrazine Update
# Change In The Weather

At the writing of this article on November the 14th, harvest conditions have been almost ideal. There have been only one or two wet spells in which both the growers and the processors were impacted by muddy field conditions. With the low amount of soil contained in deliveries, many mills have stopped washing cane. This lack of washing cane has helped to increase the amount of sugar that can be recovered from a ton of cane. With the dry field conditions, growers are reporting much fewer problems harvesting and are able to harvest cane with much less effort and cost. The dry field conditions are accompanied with reports from processors indicating that the dry harvest has aided in lowering downtime, lowering usage of natural gas in the boilers and increasing daily grinding rates. When compared to the 2002 harvest, these reductions in production costs should add to the profitability of the 2003 crop. Unfortunately, when compared to previous harvest years, growers are reporting reduced yields (tons of cane per acre). Up to date, sugar has remained constantly high with the industry reporting an average of more than 210 pounds of CRS per ton of cane. Many growers have harvested all of their Polado-treated cane and will not treat any more cane for this harvest year. History indicates that the sugar per ton of cane will decline somewhat as the Polado treated cane runs out.

This extremely dry harvest season is a welcome change from the 2002 harvest, however a little rainfall would help to cut some of the dust and perhaps improve tonnage. Most of the cane planted this fall is up to a very good stand. The late-planted cane (due to too much rain at planting time) is somewhat behind and could use a good rain. Some small amount of cane was planted very late. These were in fields of heavy clay soils that had to be forced dry before planting. Because the fields were forced, the seedcane was planted in marbles (not well-pulverized soil); there was not adequate fine soil with which to cover the seed. Due to lack of rain to seal the row and air pockets (due to poor coverage), much of the seed has dried out and the stands are questionable for the spring.

**Atrazine Update**

Atrazine is a very useful chemical and is used by the Louisiana sugarcane industry on a large amount of acreage. The use of atrazine gives good-targeted weed control at a relatively low-cost. The loss of its use in sugarcane will add to the cost of production that will reduce profits and reduce the ability to control some potential weed problems. The herbicide atrazine has been under re-registration review (IRED) by the EPA for **several months**. During this time there has been much written and reported in both radio and TV news about the bad environmental and health problems resulting from the use of atrazine. During its review, the EPA found no credible scientific evidence to back up these claims by the environmentalists.

As has been discussed in previous articles, over the past five years there have been spikes in the level of atrazine detected in the water at an Iberville water-plant. The spikes in the levels of atrazine during these five years were well above what is considered to be allowable levels for human consumption. These short-term spikes have occurred during the months of late February, March, and early April. This is the time at which both cane and corn growers apply high rates of atrazine. In most cases, these high spikes in atrazine levels have occurred when the applications of the herbicide were followed very closely by heavy rains.

These high levels of atrazine in the water could not be ignored, requiring health and environmental officials to take steps to reduce the amount of atrazine found in the watershed. One of the first considerations by the EPA was to cancel the label for atrazine, thereby ending the use of this herbicide by both sugarcane and corn producers in the upper Terrebonne Basin. However, through much negotiation by the producers of atrazine (Syngenta), EPA, and LDAF, a compromise agreement was reached. The agreement or MOA contained stipulations for more monitoring of water and field runoff, educational programs, and the implementation of voluntary BMP by both cane and corn growers who produce crops in the area. Also included in the negotiations was the use of a rolling average and threshold levels. The average of samples collected during a rolling 90-day period would be used as the standard. Any decision on the disposition of the herbicide's use in the watershed would be made. If the new threshold is exceeded for this 90 day rolling average; then there is no other option but the removal of the label for the use of atrazine in the upper Terrebonne watershed.

On November 12, 2003, the quarterly meeting of the atrazine IRED stakeholders planning group (Upper Terrebonne Basin) was held at the LDAF building in Baton Rouge. The group is made up of representatives from Syngenta, LDAF, DHH, Terrebonne Water District, the AgCenter, the Extension Service, USDA, crop consultants, the American Sugar Cane League, and other interested parties. The discussion centered on the particulars necessary to fulfill the provisions of the MOA between Syngenta and the EPA for the continued use of atrazine in the upper Terrebonne Basin.

Much of the committee's time was spent outlining methods by which information and recommendations for the use of atrazine can be presented to the growers in the region. Much of this information will be presented at upcoming grower meetings during the months of January and February. Herbicide recommendations for both cane and corn will be revised to include any changes in the recommended use of atrazine. The recommendations will call for growers voluntary utilization of alternative products, the application of atrazine at lower rates where possible, and the use of aerial application of atrazine only when there is no other alternative. If these recommendations are followed where possible, the industry should be able to take advantage of the use of this herbicide for a number of years.

As mentioned earlier in this article, during the IRED review by the EPA, there was no scientific evidence to indicate environmental or health hazards associated with the proper use of atrazine. Nevertheless, the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC) has filed a suit against the EPA claiming that there is a potential for environmental problems with some endangered species and their habitats. It is their contention that the EPA should have consulted with the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) before making a final decision on the labeling or re-labeling of atrazine. The suit filed in U.S. District Court of Maryland requests that the EPA be directed to consult with FWS and NMFS before atrazine is reregistered. The NRDC has filed suit citing the **possible damage** to endangered species in many states, including Louisiana. Listed as potential problem areas are the Midwest states Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, and Wisconsin. Southern states listed as potential problems are Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas. As can be seen in this list of states, the scope of the lawsuit is wide. Some of the data cited in the lawsuit refers to research documenting detrimental effects on frogs. Numerous other researchers have attempted to reproduce the same results and have been unable to do so.

The American Sugar Cane League and the Louisiana Farm Bureau are acting as interveners on the side of the EPA in this lawsuit. The two organizations have entered into the lawsuit with more than 30 other associations or organizations. It is hoped by doing so that a united front will show the importance of this herbicide to the farming community. If the environmental activists are successful with this strategy and can delay or prevent the registration of a herbicide that has been safely used for decades, then they will again use the same tactic against other pesticides needed for production of crops here in the U.S.

**Change In The Weather**

On November 17th, much of the cane belt received a good rain (0.75 to 1.5 in.) from a passing front. Hopefully this will just be "a passing front" and will not be the start of continuing rain. For the first time in many years, most of the industry is anticipating an early finish to harvest and being home for Christmas. Upon behalf of all the staff of the American Sugar Cane League, **WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR.**


**For Information on the Louisana Sugar Industry go to www.amscl.org**

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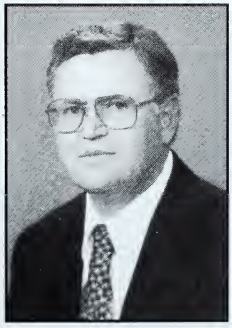

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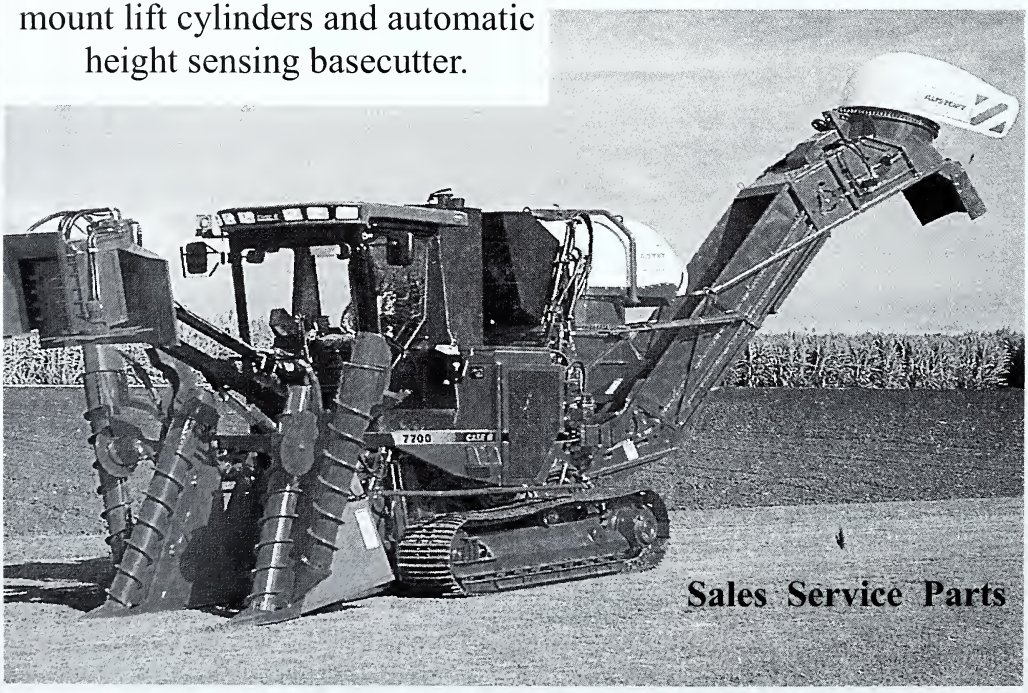

# ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

By James F. Coerver, P.E.
G.E.C., Inc.

## Looking Good

In retrospect, this observer has witnessed over the last half century a vast improvement in the environment, and as the end of 2003 approaches, sees much good in the environmental perspective. The cane sugar industry's many and complicated environmental problems are now mostly under control or nearly so, except for the problem of escalating costs for farm and factory environmental control systems and for the out-of-control environmental fees (taxes) imposed by the state regulatory agency (LDEQ). However, anyone depending on the national and local news media for information on environmental matters would most likely question the sanity or at least the visual acuity of any such optimistic environmental observer.

While the focus of the news media has been mostly on environmental transgressions and scandals, especially unsubstantiated accusations of "greenpeace" type environmentalists, environmental good news is usually ignored or downplayed. For example, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently released its *Draft Report on the Environment*, a first-ever national picture of U.S. environmental quality and human health. EPA reports therein that human health is generally good and improving, air pollution declined by 25 percent over the past 30 years while gross domestic product grew by 161 percent and energy consumption increased by 42 percent, toxic chemical releases have declined by 48 percent since 1988, and Americans served by drinking water systems meeting health-based standards increased by 15 percent to 94 percent over the last decade. Do not expect to find that good environmental news in your local newspaper or on TV, but you can access the report on the web at http://www.epa.gov/indicators.

It would be unfair to the local news media not to recognize a recent trend toward objectivity in reporting on the ozone "non-compliance" situation in the Baton Rouge metropolitan area. The Baton Rouge ozone situation was described in detail in the September issue of *The Sugar Bulletin*. To the chagrin of environmentalists, the news media is reporting the widespread public disapproval of imposing a $72 million per year penalty on the community in the form of high cost "reformulated" gasoline which, according to EPA and LDEQ experts, will do no measurable good toward meeting the ambient-air standard for ozone. This penalty would never have been imposed if environmentalists had not gone to Federal Court seeking to compel such absurd EPA action.

The Federal Court rulings on ozone non-compliance penalties did make it clear that the only relief from the situation must come from the U.S. Congress. The environmentalists were sure they had a lock on enough votes in Congress to prevent any such "backsliding" on the Clean Air Act. However, good news came yesterday that the U.S. House of Representative passed the long awaited "Energy Bill," and that bill contains a provision delaying imposition of ozone non-compliance penalties in areas that are affected by ozone generated in upwind municipalities such as the Houston area ozone causing ozone exceedences in Baton Rouge. Areas affected by upwind violators would not be penalized until the offending upwind areas are brought into compliance. Representative Billy Tauzin lead the way in providing this badly needed relief in the face of stiff opposition. The Senate is scheduled to act on the bill later this week, and indications are the energy bill will be approved.

The 2003 Energy Bill contains other environmental goodies, but the environmentalists both national and local are screaming denunciations, mostly about ozone penalty deferral. Most of the objections state falsely that the measure allows pollution to increase and/or allows cities to defer pollution abatement actions required by the Clean Air Act. Actually it does neither. All that is deferred is the useless "reformulated gasoline" penalty thereby preventing a waste of voters and taxpayers money, and all pollution abatement requirements and timetable remain in force. The environmentalists have only themselves to blame for the situation and have further damaged their credibility with the news media.

Other good news reported here recently was the August 27, 2003 promulgation by EPA of a new final rule on New Source Review (NSR). Of course, environmentalists and a few eastern states are suing to overturn the rule, but EPA and most everybody else indicate the rule is on solid legal foundation and will withstand. This means that old but compliant facilities including bagasse boilers can be repaired and kept in service rather than abandoned and/or replaced with costly new facilities.

The long-delayed boiler rules have been delayed yet again, but a draft rule for public review may be promulgated in early 2004. The good news is that the delays are mostly due to an effort by EPA to eliminate all unnecessary or overly burdensome pollution-control and reporting systems from the rule. From what information is presently available, it appears this new rule will not have any adverse impact on the Louisiana Cane Sugar industry.

Strangely enough, good environmental news came recently from Russia. Russian participation is a key requirement of the infamous Kyoto climate control treaty. Russian President Vladimir Putin firmly rejected any Russian participation because of the unbearable economic burden that would be imposed. Hopefully, the Kyoto boondoggle is dead and environmentalists will stop reviling President Bush for his opposition to this ill-advised treaty initiative.

Yes, as of late 2003, things are looking mostly good!

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# Louisiana
# Smoke Management Guidelines for Sugarcane Harvesting

All growers should have attended the Certified Burn Manager Program. The list below are the steps you should take when burning.

**Step 1. Identify Smoke Sensitive Areas**
**Step 2. Obtain Fire Weather Forecast**
**Step 3. Develop a Prescribed Burn Plan**
**Step 4. Determine Smoke Category Day**
**Step 5. Determine Smoke and Ash Screening Distance**
**Step 6. Determine Direction of Smoke and Ash Plume**
**Step 7. Evaluate the Prescribed Burn Results**
**Step 8. Keep good harvest records**

If you have misplaced your copy or would like additional copies, contact the League office or your county agent.

The League staff wishes to remind all growers that although these guidelines are voluntary, it is vitally important that burning operations be conducted in as efficient a manner as possible in order to manage smoke and ash and reduce their impact on the public.

The future of cane burning depends upon the successful incorporation of these guidelines into your farming operation.

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# THE SUGAR BULLETIN

**Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A.**

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**The mission of the American Sugar Cane League is to sustain success through effective research, positive legislation, public relations/promotion, and education.**

# The Sugar Bulletin

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# UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

## A Time to Come and a Time to Go!

I guess you're thinking, what on earth is this portion of Charlie's article going to cover with a title like that? Well. Senator John Breaux.

In his retirement announcement of Monday, December 15, 2003, our senior U.S. Senator stated that there is a time to come and a time to go, and the time to go is when you are at the top of your game. While the top of his game is what all Louisianans like about the seniority system in Congress and the natural ability of the good Senator to negotiate and operate across party lines and ideologies, it is difficult for the average person to understand why such a good player would want to retire. And why now?

As much as I hate to see him go, which has to do with his dedication to this industry and this state, I fully understand his desire to have some years of his life to spend more time with his family. There is not much privacy, especially when you are one of only 100 such people, as he is, in this entire country. You live in a glass house and always need to be cautious of any statement that you make for fear that it will be misinterpreted or misrepresented. To go out to eat with friends or family in a local restaurant, and to engage in casual conversation with your party without interruption from good people who just want to say hello, becomes a difficult task. The friends and family are usually more upset by the interruption than is the Senator, although John couldn't have had a better partner throughout his career than his wife and friend Lois.

To Senator John Breaux: It has been a great pleasure to have known and worked with you during your tenure in the House and Senate while you served this great country, state and industry of ours. This state has been very fortunate to have such Senators as Allen Ellender, Russell Long, J. Bennett Johnston, and now John Breaux.

We will all miss you. And while I have wished you would stay for one more term, I respect you most for having the courage to make the difficult decision to move on. Many people may never understand the difficulty you and Lois faced in making such a decision. But the emotion of the decision did show that faithful Monday in Baton Rouge. On behalf of this industry, I thank you for your loyal service throughout the years. I also wish you good luck in whatever endeavor or profession you may pursue. But until you leave, your constituents expect to see you at the office on time!

Additionally, I must also note that you could not have been as good a public servant as you have been without the dedication of the terrific staff people you have had working with you throughout the years. To all of you . . . Many thanks!

**Melancon for Congress**

By the time you read this article, I may be on an administrative leave of absence from the President & General Manager's position at the League, putting together an organization to make a run for the seat presently held by Congressman Billy Tauzin of the 3rd Congressional District. I would have written a farewell to Billy also, but you see Billy, you haven't said yet whether you are truly leaving. If it is okay with Billy and the League Board, I would like to do such an article, when and if he does depart, or at least when and if he makes such an announcement.

The decision to seek election has not come easily for Peachy and I, mainly because of my concern for the industry that I have grown up in and now serve. However, with the encouragement and support of many friends in and out of the sugar industry, I feel I can take your fight, and that of other affected people and businesses in the Third Congressional District and this state to the Congress of the United States. That by no means infers that Billy and the rest of the Louisiana delegation aren't doing a good job. Quite the contrary, it is my hope that I can be part of this great delegation of Louisianans and continue the effort to make this district, state and nation better for all of us.

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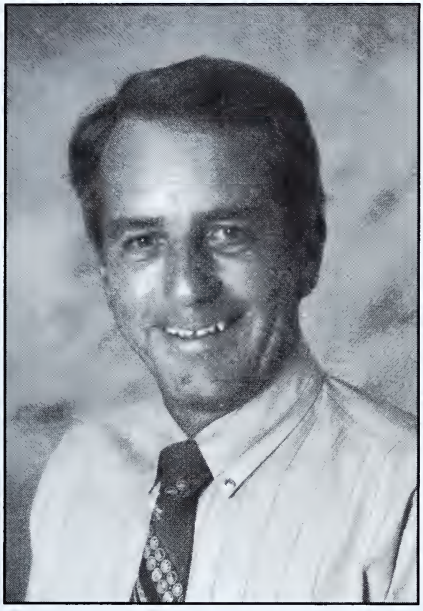

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# WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

## Breaux Announces Retirement Plans
## Agricultural Appropriations - CAFTA Talks In DC
## Energy Bill Stalled Until January
## USDA WASDE December Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

In mid-December, Senator John Breaux announced that he would not seek re-election in 2004, marking the end of 32 years of outstanding congressional service to the citizens of the state, including 14 years in the House and 18 years in the U.S. Senate. Senator Breaux has been a true champion for the sugarcane farmers and industry throughout his tenure in Washington. An undisputed leader of the Senate Sweetener Caucus, Senator Breaux has fought against efforts to kill our industry, whether in farm bill or appropriations battles, as well as efforts to circumvent US tariff laws. Most recently, Senator Breaux has been instrumental in educating the White House on the potential consequences of destroying the livelihoods of Louisianans involved in the production and processing of sugarcane.

Senator Breaux will remain an active (and, no doubt, highly effective) Senator throughout 2004. I will have more to say about this outstanding legislator and friend during the next year but I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest respect and admiration for this champion. I hope you all have an opportunity in the coming year to let Senator Breaux know how much you appreciate what he has done for Louisiana sugar over the past 32 years.

**Agricultural Appropriations**

Congress went into recess for the holidays without completing work on the omnibus budget package containing the agricultural appropriations. The House approved the budget package after the Senate went into recess and further action by that body is expected in January. The package contains an increase of $270,000 for Houma research activities above FY2003 funding levels and also provides $1.35 million in new funds for buildings and facilities design and construction.

**CAFTA Talks In DC**

The trade negotiations with Central American nations (Central American Free Trade Agreement) were renewed in Washington, DC in mid-December amid uncertainty over the inclusion of sugar in these negotiations. The government of Costa Rica pulled out of the negotiations in the eleventh hour and the final agreement covered only the remaining four CAFTA countries (Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras and El Salvador), but the agreement will serve as a template for agreements with Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic, not to mention the other bilateral and regional trade pacts the Administration plans to deliver to Congress in the coming months.

At the time of this writing, the details of the CAFTA agreement were just beginning to emerge. The best news is that the over-quota (2nd Tier) import tariff was left untouched by negotiators. On the other hand, the quotas for the individual countries were increased by a cumulative figure less than 90,000 tons in the first year, with a roughly 2 percent growth factor (on the CAFTA quota addition only, not the WTO commitments) leading to additional imports of slightly less than 130,000 tons in the 15th year (or 255,000 tons when current WTO committments are added). A two percent growth rate will be applied annually after that, effectively increasing the quota by less than 2,200 tons per year.

The agreement includes a stocks management option whereby the U.S. government could decide that the U.S. market does not need additional imports and could choose to compensate to the CAFTA countries for unused access, with ongoing negotiations about how this provision would work, i.e. whether it would be a cash payment, exchange of sugar from CCC stocks, or by providing them other commodities held in stocks.

The agreement also includes the net-surplus producer provision contained in the Chile FTA, increased access only comes into play when and to the extent that the country involved is a net-exporter. This provision has little bearing with the CAFTA countries but was included in this pact with an eye toward linking this agreement to ongoing talks with the Dominican Republic.

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**Energy Bill Stalled Until January**

A full-court press to complete work on the energy bill was stalled in the Senate over the issue of including liability protection for MTBE producers but Chairman Billy Tauzin (R-LA) is expected to renew and redouble his efforts to push this bill through both Houses of Congress in January 2004.

**USDA WASDE December Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released**

The USDA released its December World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. Projected U.S. sugar production for fiscal year 2002/03 was unchanged at 8,378,000 (raw value), with beet production remaining at 4,415,000 and cane production at 3,963,000 short tons. Louisiana production for 2002/03 was unchanged at 1,389,000. 2002/03 total imports were unchanged at 1,713,000 short tons and imports under TRQ were likewise unchanged at 1,200,000 short tons. Total supply was unchanged at 11,517,000, 2002/03 exports were likewise unchanged at 142,000 short tons, leaving ending stocks at 1,305,000 and 2002/03 ending stocks-to-use at 12.8 percent, all unchanged from November.

2003/04 production was increased to 8,969,000 from 8,895,000 short tons in November, with beet production rising to 4,798,000 from 4,720,000 and cane production dropping slightly to 4,171,000 from 4,175,000 short tons last month. Louisiana cane sugar production was reduced slightly to 1,566,000 from 1,578,000 short tons in November. The beet production increase, combined with no changes in imports at 1,584,000, resulted in an increase in 2003/04 total supply to 11,858,000 from 11,784,000 short tons in November. Exports and sales for domestic uses were unchanged at 160,000 short tons and 9,675,000, respectively, resulting in no changes to total uses at 9,835,000 short tons. Ending stocks were increased to 2,023,000 from 1,949,000 short tons, resulting in an increase in the stocks-to-use ratio to 20.6 percent from 19.8 percent last month.

# ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

## Thank You - Crop Report
## American Society of Sugarcane Technologists

Nearly all of the researchers' work at the LSU AgCenter Sugarcane Research Station at St. Gabriel and the Ardoyne Farm (USDA-ARS Sugarcane Research Farm) has been completed for 2003. The collection of reliable data for many of the various research projects would not be available if it were not for the cooperation of Cameco. Because the leaders at Cameco know the importance of variety research and all other research to the production of sugarcane here in Louisiana, each year they provide, rent free, the use of a combine harvester to each of the two research stations. These harvesters are invaluable during each stage of the variety program. With the use of a combine harvester, those who are doing variety research are able to obtain reliable information on the potential yielding ability of new varieties.

The delivery of clean high quality cane to the mill at a low cost is one of the major objectives of the Louisiana sugar industry and researchers working for the industry. In an effort to improve the quality of cane going to the mill, Cameco makes available to researchers for evaluation, harvesters that have been modified and that appear to deliver better quality cane. By doing so, research data can be obtained to support or not support the perceived advantage of the improvement.

On behalf of the researchers in the variety program at the two stations and the other sugarcane researchers that depend on the information coming from the generosity of Cameco, THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

**Crop Report**

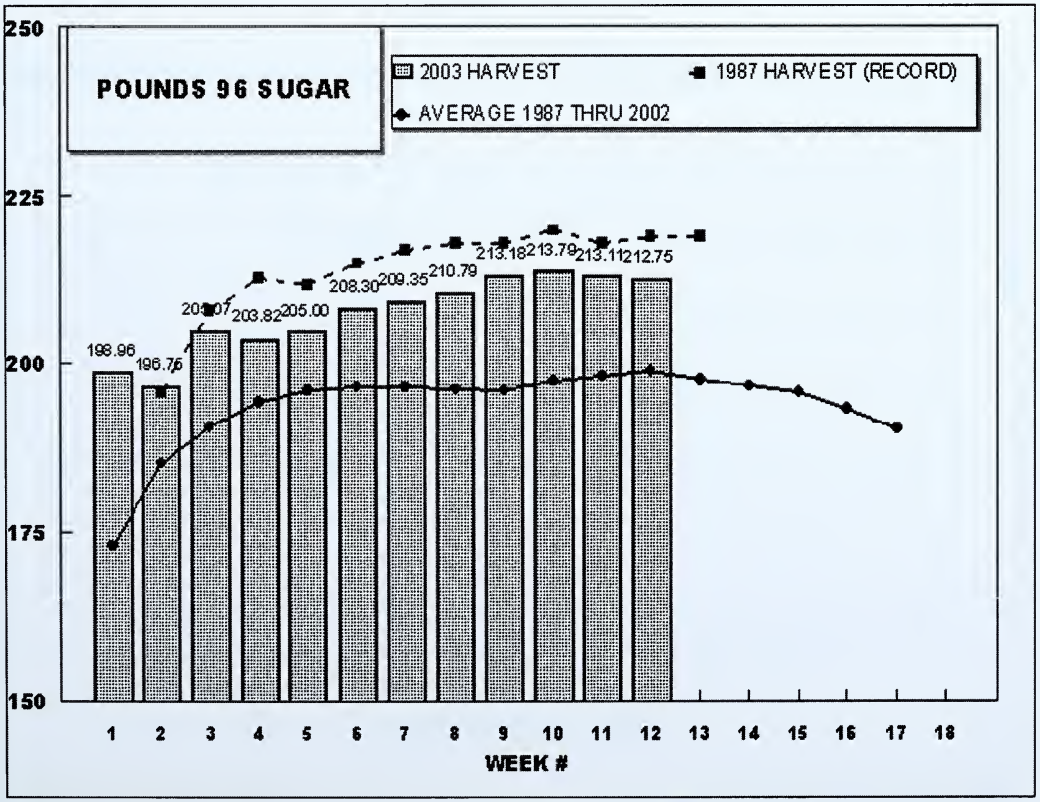
As growers have gotten into the harvest of plant cane and first stubble fields, they have reported an increase in tonnage. However, in most cases the yields are lower-than-expected by some three to four tons per acre. At the writing of this article on December 15, the end of this year's harvest is growing very near. Here on the Teche two mills have already completed their 2003 harvests. Iberia Co-op was the first mill to complete this year's harvest. The co-op completed its harvest on December 8. LASUCA completed harvest before the end of the same week, and were receiving no cane on Saturday December 13. In a recent survey of mills, eight of the fifteen mills indicated that they would complete their harvest season before December 20. Only three mills indicated that they would not conclude harvest before Christmas. All of the mills reported on the estimation of the crop from their last grower-survey. These estimations of the remaining crop did not indicate an adequate cane supply that would require processing into January. As of yet, there have been no freezes severe enough to split the cane stalks. However, there have been several frosts with minimum temperatures at daybreak of 28 to 29 degrees. Depending on the region of the cane belt the severity of frosts or freezes can be seen easily. In the southern regions of the cane belt, a few viable terminal buds can still be found in standing cane. In areas where cane was protected by trees or growing near a body of water, it is still very green. Due to the

shortness of the harvest season there should be no losses from freeze damage to cane.

The lack of rainfall for the first two-thirds of this harvest has allowed growers to burn much of their cane residue during the harvest season. However, the wet field conditions of the last two or three weeks have prevented the burning of fields by many growers. Research data indicates that if the residue is not removed from the row top by mid January, there can be significant yield losses. This data also indicates that the burning of cane fields to remove residue in mid February and early March can reduce yields. Only a few fields are badly rutted after this year's harvest. Growers are reminded that LCP 85-384 does not tolerate waterlogged soils. Growers are also reminded that any rutted fields should be drained as quickly as possible and fields should not go through the winter months with standing water.

Several fronts have passed through the cane belt during the last two or three weeks. And with their passage, most of the state's sugarcane acreage received excessive rainfall. Most areas reported four to five inches of rain, while there were a few scattered reports of ten inches of rain. These rains were accompanied by 35 to 45 mile per hour winds. Until these excessive rain and winds, the crop was standing straight and sucrose was continuing to go up. With the passage of these fronts, most fields of standing cane were knocked down and field conditions became very muddy. The worsening field conditions were soon reflected by the lower quality of cane going to the mill. This was mirrored in reports from growers indicating lower core values, while the mills were reporting lower recovery rates.

History indicates that there is a normal drop in sucrose each year during the month of December. If the average recovery from mills is looked at for the years of 1987 through 2002 (Graph #1) there is a clear indication that sugar production continues to increase until about the first week of December. This data indicates that sugar recoveries then decrease from the first week in December until harvest is completed. There are two main reasons for the decline in sugar at this




* = Harvest data compiled from Dr. Harold Birkett's Weekly Comparative Manufacturing Report

time, one of which is that December is normally a very wet month. With these December rains and poor drying conditions harvest becomes very difficult and high quality cane (cane low in trash and mud) is hard to deliver. Not only do field conditions deteriorate, this is normally about the time harvest of Polado treated fields is completed.

As one looks at the loads of cane being delivered to the mill, it is obvious that field conditions have deteriorated significantly. After the rain because of the saturated field conditions, combine harvesters are not able to do a good job removing the wet leaf shucks and other materials. Also, because the cane is lodged, there are now a greater number of bull shoots. Where the frosts have not killed the growing points, top portions of the cane stalks are trying to erect themselves. Both of these factors detract from sugar production by the cane stalk.

Because of the wet muddy conditions, mills have resumed washing of cane. As has been reported on numerous occasions the washing of cane decreases yield by four to six lbs. of sugar per ton of cane. Again, this is a factor in the decreased recovery of sugar. The combination of all these factors are the reasons why sugar per ton of cane and recovery have decreased.

**American Society of Sugarcane Technologists**

Growers and processors are reminded of the upcoming dates for the ASSCT annual meeting. Once again, the Louisiana Division of ASSCT will hold its annual meeting at the Radisson Hotel and Conference Center, in Baton Rouge, LA. The dates for the meetings are Tuesday and Wednesday, February 3-4, 2004. The technical session for the manufacturing section will be held Tuesday afternoon, with the technical Agriculture session being held Wednesday morning. For additional information, contact Dr. Denver Loupe at 225-578-6530 or visit the ASSCT website at www.assct.org.

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# THE BATON ROUGE LINE

By Tom Spradley
Spradley and Spradley

## New Leadership Shaping Up - Budget Woes

Governor-Elect Kathleen Blanco is cautiously setting up a legislative leadership structure with which she feels comfortable as she begins to push for her vision of 21st century Louisiana. The Louisiana legislature, probably more than any other state legislature, traditionally seeks a partnership relationship with the new Governor by enlisting significant input from him/her in electing its leaders. Senator Don Hines, a doctor from Bunkie with a record of support for agricultural issues, has Blanco's blessing for the job of President of the Senate. Representative Joe Salter, a career educator from Florien, has been offered with Blanco's approval for Speaker of the House. Both races seem to be settled as this article is prepared for press.

Senator Hines was the most controversial of the two but the decision seems to have been settled without bloodshed. Rep. Charlie De Witt stepped aside to allow Salter to step into the Speaker's post with less commotion. Both Hines and Salter must wait until an organizational meeting of the legislature after Blanco's inauguration before it all becomes official.

Representative Jerry Luke LeBlanc has been persuaded to resign from the legislature to accept the post of Commissioner of Administration for the Blanco team. The Commissioner of Administration is the business manager of the state. LeBlanc is one of the most popular people to serve in the legislature in recent times and is broadly heralded as one of the smartest and straight-shooting people available to her and is thought to be a very bright jewel in her crown. LeBlanc has chaired the budget committee for years and knows more about the balance sheet and what makes it balance than anyone. This was a very popular choice!

A great deal of bargaining is ongoing over who gets to chair which committee and as with her first choices Gov.-elect Blanco is being deliberate and cautious and she seems to be letting her legislative leaders pick their own committee structure, again keeping an eye on the Blanco agenda for change for Louisiana.

**Budget Woes**

It seems that they never change the tune on the budget. Here we go again with another $300 million budget deficit. Outgoing U.S. Senator John Breaux has put an extra $100 million in the federal health care budget for Louisiana and the Revenue Estimating Conference predicts an increase from state tax revenues of $60 to 70 million but the way the budget goblins work we are still faced with a $300 million gap between income and expense.

The problem comes from programmed salary increases, rent increases, etc. and that assumes that $170 million in "temporarily permanent" (or permanently temporary) sales taxes are renewed in a special session this spring. There always seems to be lots of talk that THIS YEAR they won't renew the taxes but they always do when push comes to shove.

Another budget worry is that Blanco promised to phase out unpopular business taxes, which everyone agrees, make it difficult to recruit new business to the state. Louisiana is one of the few states that taxes business debt as capital and levies a sales tax on machinery and equipment. It is likely that the Legislature will not start the phase-out immediately and will dodge that bullet for a couple of years.

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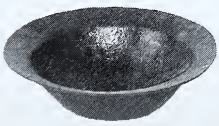

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[1] Preharvest interval of 140 days in sugarcane established under Special Local Need 24(c) Label for the state of Louisiana.

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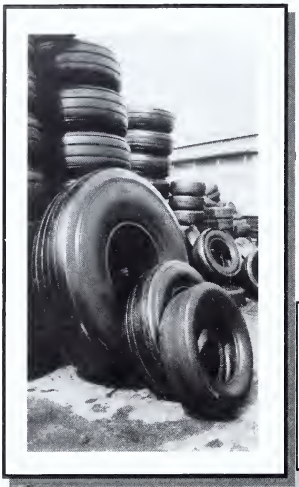

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**Volume 82, No. 5** **February 2004**

# THE SUGAR BULLETIN

**Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A.**

**Announcing the**

## Eighty-First Annual Meeting

**of the**

## American Sugar Cane League

**of the U.S.A., Inc.**

**Wednesday, February 25, 2004 - 10:00 a.m.**
**Thibodaux Civic Center**
**310 N. Canal Blvd., Thibodaux, LA**

Registration begins at 9:00 a.m.
At this meeting there will be an election of members of the Board of Directors to serve during the ensuing year.

A luncheon will follow the meeting at 12 Noon.
(See Up Front With the League for more information)
The League Foundation will also hold a meeting to elect a Board of Directors.

**All members of the League will please consider this an official notice to attend.**

The mission of the American Sugar Cane League is to sustain success through effective research, positive legislation, public relations/promotion, and education.

# The Sugar Bulletin

The Official Organ of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A., Inc.

Charles J. Melancon/Editor
Windell R. Jackson/Senior Agronomist
Herman Waguespack, Jr./Agronomist

John Constant/Business Manager
Nannette B. Nickens/Administrative Assistant
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# Annual Meetng of the American Sugar Cane League
# Report of the Nominating Committee
# Congress & CAFTA - Stand up

The Eighty-first Annual Meeting of the American Sugar Cane League will be held February 25, 2004 at the Thibodaux Civic Center in Thibodaux, Louisiana. Registration will begin at 9:00 a.m. and the meeting will be called to order by Chairman of the Board John Gay at 10:00 a.m.

The first order of business will be the report of the Nominating Committee which will present its nominees for Directors for the ensuing year. Following this important report and potential election, there will be reports from the Finance Committee, Legislative Committee and Research Committee. Any other business to come before the general membership will be considered before adjourning.

The High Yield Awards Program will be held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting again this year.

As of this date, no speaker has been confirmed. Should there not be a guest speaker, the High Yield Awards program will take place during the luncheon.

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO RETURN THE RSVP CARD STAPLED TO THE MIDDLE OF THIS ISSUE. THIS WILL AID US IN GETTING A HEAD COUNT FOR THE MEAL.**

The Board of Directors and Staff of the League urge your attendance and solicit your input at the annual meeting.

**Report of the Nominating Committee**

The following individuals were nominated at the annual committee meeting to serve on the American Sugar Cane League Board of Directors beginning on February 25, 2004.

***Grower Member Nominees***

David Allain
Jessie Breaux
Grady Bubenzer
Willie Danos
Wallace Ellender
John Gay
Ronald Gonsoulin
Dean Gravois
Warren Harang, III
Jackie Judice
Robert "Bobby" Judice
Lawrence "Boo" Levert, III
Jerome "Jerry " McKee
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Greg Nolan
Anthony Parris
Rivers Patout
Matthew "Butch" Plauche
R.L. "Bobby" Roane
David Stewart
Jackie Theriot
Tommy Thibodeaux

*Processor At-large Member Nominees*
Paul Bourdier
Lonnie Champagne
Wilson LeBlanc
Duane Legendre
Charlie Schudmak
David Thibodeaux
Wilbert Waguespack

**Congress & CAFTA**

The Congress has been on recess since mid- December and scheduled to return on Tuesday, January 20, 2004. Our sources in Washington advise that the Congress is not expected to do much this year on legislation that may be controversial as this is a big election cycle year with the White House included in the mix. The expectation, at present is that the CAFTA will, in all likelihood, not be brought up for a vote. The USTR has not finalized the agreement with Costa Rica and the expectation is that they will "dock" the Dominican Republic onto the agreement, which will obviously delay the agreement from moving through the scheduled processes of public comment before a vote by the Congress. In the meantime, the US sugar industry will be monitoring the pact and planning a strategy in hopes of defeating this agreement.

I am deeply saddened to see my own government working to purposefully put this industry out of business. Mr. Zoellick and other free traders make such statements as "antiquated and inefficient producers" when they speak of the industry. This proves that they never bothered to get the facts; much less did they appear to care. This administration only seems to listen to the large multinational corporations that couldn't care less from what country they get the inputs to their products, nor what chemicals may have been used on that crop, or the fact that there are no environmental regulations to speak of in these countries, and they obviously were looking past those four and six year old kids cutting cane for a living in the fields of these developing countries. And, in Mr. Zoellick's own words, which illustrates perfectly that he doesn't have a clue, he said in his comments at the New Orleans WTC luncheon that "the 27,000 people in the Louisiana sugar industry could come get jobs at the port of New Orleans." This public official, paid by your tax dollars, apparently doesn't realize that you have homes in rural Louisiana, family and businesses, mortgages and other obligations that prevent such a transfer. And, is that the only jobs that CAFTA and these bi-lateral agreements will bring to our state and country? Does that mean that we all become worker "ants" and the only place to get a job is at the Port of New Orleans? Such simplistic statements by a man who is supposed to be so intelligent! But then, he and others like him appear to have their own agenda and it obviously doesn't include American farm families, our businesses, or our rural communities.

It is a crying shame that the Louisiana sugar industry and its counterparts scattered about some 22 states have continued to reinvest our income back into our businesses to become efficient and cost effective producers and processors just to get it taken away. To be competitive by world standards, and then to have a few people who obviously don't care about US jobs, farm families or rural Louisiana and America trade us off as though we were some old worn out mules is frustrating!

Particularly, it truly saddens me when the President of the United States has made statements such as those, which he made to Governor Foster and his Executive Counsel that, "as long as John Breaux is in the Senate the sugar industry will be safe." Or, the political arm of

the White House headed by Carl Rove telling not only members of Congress but representatives of the US sugar industry and supporters of the President not to worry. "Go home, tell your people that the White House will not include you in the CAFTA, but don't tell anyone as we (USTR) will take care of your concern." And, take care of our concern they did! As the old saying goes, we went from the pan to the fire!

For as long as I have been at the League, the US sugar industry has supported free, but fair trade and has consistently prescribed to the premise that all sugar producing countries must negotiate multi-laterally at one time in order to level the distorted and uneven playing field of subsidies, support mechanisms and other schemes world wide. To unilaterally be disarmed while not providing for the same by other sugar producing countries is totally unfair. While some other sectors of the Ag community believe they have a great victory in the CAFTA, I am fearful that any one of them may be the next sacrificial offering in the next trade pact. Some of them can't seem to understand who is actually steering this ship, and it isn't American Agriculture, but instead the multinational corporations that don't care from where the inputs to their products are purchased, as long as the cost is less. It's only a shame that they don't pass on the savings to their customers, but instead just pay their executives more money when the dividend per share increases with the profits. But, then, why should they care about sugar farmers in Louisiana or America, or for that matter do they really care about rice, corn or wheat, and what is a farmer or a farm family? They apparently don't recognize us because we are not the ones in the expensive suits and alligator shoes.

While our Congress finally works on an Energy policy which is intended to keep this country strong and allow for better national security and less dependence on foreign sources for our fuel supply, I see the same government dismantling the US agricultural infrastructure which will some day leave us totally dependent on foreign producers to supply us with our food and fiber. It is truly a scary thought that reminds me of the kid's tale of the Pied Piper and how he lured the rats with his magical music and then led them straight into the river! And I believe you all know how that story ended!

**Stand up**

As you can tell by the first part of this article I am not excited with our government. No one sector should be traded off for benefits to another, particularly if the sector is competitive in production cost on a global basis.

Which leads me to suggest to you that we haven't yet begun to fight. Fighting the CAFTA will be a tough fight, but we can defeat it. It may take more than just phone call. It may become necessary for farmers to march in Washington to demonstrate to our government our displeasure. We are a peaceful people, but many of us have French heritage. . . and the French, I am proud to say, carry on quite well when their government displeases them. So, be ready to join the fight to save our industry and make other commodity groups aware that they could well have been the ones in our shoes; and, they still might be!

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# WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

## Agricultural Appropriations - CAFTA
## Energy Bill Stalled Until February
## USDA WASDE January Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

When the Senate returns from the holiday recess, completing work on the omnibus budget package will be one of the first priorities. The House approved the budget package after the Senate went into recess last year. The package contains an increase of $270,000 for Houma research activities above FY2003 funding levels, and also provides $1.35 million in new funds for buildings and facilities design and construction, but these totals may be reduced as a part of across-the-board cuts that conferees agreed on last autumn. The Senate was scheduled to take up the omnibus bill when they returned to Washington on January 20, but Senate Democrats appear to be lining up in opposition. Hopefully, this may cause only temporary delays in approving this essential appropriations package.

**CAFTA**

In January, the Administration continued efforts to complete negotiations with Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic in order to roll those countries into the CAFTA agreement reached in December 2003. In addition, trade negotiators were hoping to jump-start negotiations with Australia later this month.

In mid-January, sugar industry principals from around the country congregated in Washington, DC, to develop a framework plan for opposing the sugar provisions in CAFTA. The industry released a statement following the meeting affirming their commitment to defeating CAFTA if the sugar provisions remain in the agreement. Since the Louisiana industry has been on the front-lines of this battle for months, this news was a welcome sign that others were newly energized to join the fight.

Jackie Theriot and the Louisiana Farm Bureau members deserve a lot of credit for creating another bit of welcome news – the clarification of the national association's trade policy to reflect the concerns of import sensitive commodities.

Our early successes in this battle may cause the Administration to delay a CAFTA vote until after the November elections, but this is as uncertain as the eventual outcome of a CAFTA vote in the House. With three open House seats and another Senate race with national implications, Louisiana will continue to command the attention of partisan leaders. The state's importance in the presidential elections would seem to make the case for delaying the CAFTA vote, but keep in mind that this only sets up a vote in the aftermath of the elections – when Louisiana (and sugar votes) may not be as prominent in the thoughts of political leaders in Washington (and Crawford, TX).

**Energy Bill Stalled Until February**

Indications are that Congressional leadership will make one more push for approval of the energy bill in the Senate in early to mid-February. We will follow this process and report back any new information next month.

**USDA WASDE January Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released**

The USDA released its January World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. Projected U.S. sugar production for fiscal year 2002/03 was increased slightly to 8,380,000 short tons (raw value), with beet production remaining at 4,415,000 and cane production edging up 2,000 tons to 3,965,000 short tons. Louisiana production for 2002/03 was lowered by 20,000 to 1,389,000. 2002/03 total imports were raised slightly to 1,720,000 from 1,713,000 short tons, but imports under TRQ were unchanged at 1,200,000 short tons. Total supply was at 11,526,000, up from 11,517,000 in December, and 2002/03 exports were unchanged at 142,000 short tons. As a result of various minor changes, ending stocks fell slightly to 1,304,000 and 2002/03 ending stocks-to-use was unchanged at 12.8 percent.

2003/04 production was decreased to 8,948,000 short tons from 8,969,000 short tons last month, with beet production rising to 4,852,000 from 4,798,000 and cane production dropping slightly to 4,097,000 from 4,171,000 short tons last month. The cane reduction was directly related to a drop in the Louisiana cane sugar production estimate to 1,472,000 short tons from 1,566,000 short tons in December. 2003/04 total supply was projected to fall to 11,836,000 from 11,858,000 in December. Exports and sales for domestic uses were unchanged at 160,000 short tons and 9,675,000, respectively, resulting in no changes to total uses at 9,835,000 short tons. Ending stocks were decreased to 2,001,000 from 2,023,000 short tons, resulting in a slight decrease in the stocks-to-use ratio to 20.3 percent from 20.6 percent last month.

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For more information about K-4™ sugarcane herbicide, contact Toby McCown at (337) 794-2194 or your local DuPont crop protection retailer.

[1] Preharvest interval of 140 days in sugarcane established under Special Local Need 24(c) Label for the state of Louisiana.

**This reference guide is not intended to substitute for the product label for the products referenced herein. Product labels for the above products contain important precautions, directions for use and product warranty and liability limitations that must be read before using the product. Applicators must be in possession of the product label(s) at the time of application. Always read and follow all label directions and precautions for use when using any pesticide alone or in tank mix combinations.**

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*The miracles of science™*

By Windell Jackson

*Author's Note: Much like the stock market, maximizing the potential of a herbicide program is a matter of timing. To maximize the effects of and returns from a herbicide application it should be put out at the right time and under the best possible climatic conditions. Additionally, for a herbicide to have maximum efficacy the targeted weeds should be at an ideal growth stage. In the following article, Dr. Jim Griffin with the LSU AgCenter in the Department of Agronomy and Environmental Management presents a review of winter weed control and the importance of timing for the control of targeted weeds.*

# It's Time to Think About Winter Weeds and Bermudagrass

***by Jim Griffin***

Weed pressure in sugarcane fields right now in mid-January ranges from nothing to a mat of green vegetation completely covering the rows. In most cases weed pressure is greatest in fields where sugarcane residue was burned early in the season and in plant cane where herbicides just ran out. In fields where sugarcane residue is still present it is doing a good job of suppressing weed emergence. This positive attribute of crop residue, however, also can be negative when considering the crop. Research conducted by USDA researchers in Houma over several years clearly shows that a sugarcane yield reduction of 4 to 5 tons per acre can occur if crop residue is not removed. If you have fields right now that can be burned then do so as soon as possible, preferably by mid February. In fields where winter weeds are present take a close look to see exactly what you have. Generally the winter weeds present in fields will include some combination of the following: buttercups, chickweeds, clovers/medics, common dandelion, cressleaf groundsel (yellow top), curly dock, cutleaf eveningprimrose, geranium, henbit, marestail, purslane speedwell, shepherdspurse, smallflower bittercress, sowthistle, swine cress, Virginia pepperweed, geranium, annual bluegrass, rescuegrass, ryegrass, and timothygrass.

In general winter broadleaf weeds are easier to control than grasses. It is important not so much to know what specific weed you have but rather how much winter grass is present. This is because a significant presence of grasses in the mix will require that paraquat (Gramoxone Extra, Gramoxone Max, or Boa) be applied. For broadleaf weeds 2,4-D, Weedmaster, Brash, or Kambamaster are

generally very effective. Winter weeds, if not removed can slow warming and drying of sugarcane beds, interfere with tillage operations, and hinder emergence and early season growth of sugarcane. Winter weeds need to be removed to maximize yield potential of the crop.

Consideration also should be given right now to bermudagrass. Although not a winter weed, bermudagrass can be an aggressive competitor with sugarcane as the crop is emerging in the spring. I have heard complaints that herbicides applied at planting last year just gave out after about eight weeks and bermudagrass reinfested some planted cane. The "breaking" of the herbicide was not just restricted to a single herbicide. The reality is that for any herbicide to control bermudagrass longer than eight weeks in moist soil when soil temperatures are high is asking a lot. In the sugarcane weed control guide provided through the LSU AgCenter we are careful in using the word "control" with any herbicide for bermudagrass. Suppression is a better term although we have seen excellent suppression/control in some cases. It appears that the most displeasure with herbicides applied at planting last year in regard to bermudagrass control was where a good fallow program combining glyphosate (Roundup products) and tillage was not used. Bermudagrass control in sugarcane involves a program approach that starts in the fallow year. This topic will be discussed at a later date.

The jury is still out as to what will be the long-term consequence in those plant cane fields where bermudagrass was present going into the winter. The herbicide applied at planting may not have controlled bermudagrass, but there is no way of knowing if bermudagrass root systems and rhizomes (underground stems) were developed enough for plants to survive the winter dormant period. The cold weather and wet soil conditions have definitely put a hurt on bermudagrass and we might be surprised as to how well the herbicides performed when conditions are conducive to weed regrowth in the spring.

One thing is for certain, once bermudagrass has emerged from the winter dormant period it is impossible to control with herbicides that we have available. The good news is that we have a second opportunity to suppress or even control bermudagrass if we apply certain herbicides early enough. Contrary to what you are accustomed to, you might want to consider a January or early February application of Dupont K4 or Command plus Direx. The purpose for the early application is get the chemical in the soil and around the root system of bermudagrass before it begins to regrow. The question is often asked if this early application will result in the herbicide running out of gas before layby. This should not be a problem especially with the shift in recent years toward earlier layby. Cool soil temperatures in late winter will prolong the life of a herbicide and herbicide applied in January or February will last much longer than when applied in August. The bottom line here is simple – the only option that you have to effectively manage bermudagrass is to apply herbicide in January or early February before the weed initiates new growth. A later application in March may slow bermudagrass growth but it will recover quickly.

Provided below are specific weed control recommendations for three scenarios.

Scenario #1 - Fields with crop residue present and sparse winter weeds – Remove the crop residue as soon as possible either by burning or by using an implement (Broussard, Lawson, Orthman, or Sunco or brush). Keep in mind that use of a "trash removing" implement will clean the row top but will move the residue into the row middles. This additional residue in the row middles could interfere with tillage operations in the spring but also could offer benefits in non-rutted fields if you plan to reduce or eliminate spring tillage operations. Research is underway to evaluate mechanical removal of crop residue versus burning and how this might fit in reduced tillage programs.

Scenario #2 - Fields with broadleaf and/or grass winter weeds and where you suspect that bermudagrass will not be a problem – It is not critical that you get into those fields right now. Herbicides can be applied in late February or early March but don't delay too long. Smaller weeds are easier to control

and die faster than larger weeds. If you have only broadleaf weeds 2,4-D at 2 qt/A or Weedmaster/Brash/Kambamaster at 1 qt/A can be applied broadcast when air temperature is above 65° F. These rates could be adjusted downward somewhat depending on the size of the weeds and whether or not another herbicide is added. Aatrex/Atrazine, Direx/Karmex, or Spartan may be added to improve weed control and to provide soil residual activity. You could also choose to apply the herbicides on a band and use tillage to control weeds in the middles.

If ryegrass or other grass weeds are present a broadcast application of Gramoxone Extra or Boa at 1.5 to 2 pt/A or Gramoxone Max at 1.25 to 1.68 pt/A plus nonionic surfactant or crop oil concentrate can be made up until sugarcane has 4 leaves. Of course an earlier application would be more cost effective and would help to reduce the impact of ryegrass on sugarcane emergence and growth. Aatrex/Atrazine, Direx/Karmex, or Spartan may be added to improve weed control and to provide soil residual activity. Our research has shown that even under heavy ryegrass and broadleaf weed pressure that a broadcast application of Gramoxone Extra at 2 pt/A or Gramoxone Max at 1.68 pt/A with Dupont K4 at 4 lb/A was highly effective and that addition of 2,4-D or Weedmaster was not needed. As also noted earlier, herbicides could be applied on a band with tillage used to control weeds in the middles.

**Note:** In the sugarcane weed control guide provided through the LSU AgCenter herbicide rates represent the amount of formulated material needed for one acre on a broadcast basis. To calculate the band rate, use the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Band width in inches}}{\text{Row width in inches}} \times \text{Broadcast RATE per acre} = \text{Band RATE per acre}$$

This calculation will provide the correct band rate for any formulation, liquid or dry.

Scenario #3 - Fields with broadleaf and/or grass winter weeds and where you suspect that bermudagrass will be a problem. You should apply Dupont K4 at 4 lb/A or Command at 3 pt/A plus Direx in January or early February. It is better to be too early than too late. Whether to apply the herbicide on a band or broadcast is a decision that will depend on how much you are willing to spend and your specific management program. If you plan to eliminate spring tillage in plant cane and in non-rutted stubble fields it would be advisable to broadcast herbicide. If winter broadleaf weeds are present, 2,4-D, Weedmaster, Brash, or Kambamaster can be applied with Dupont K4 or Command/Direx. If ryegrass or other grass weeds are present, Gramoxone Extra, Gramoxone Max, or Boa should be included as described for Scenario #2.

The intent of this article is to provide you with a starting point to think about planning your weed control program. A meeting with your county agent or consultant may help to develop or to fine-tune a weed control program specific to your needs.

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*Dr. Jim Griffin is with the LSU AgCenter in the Department of Agronomy and Environmental Management and has research and extension responsibilities in the area of sugarcane weed management. Results from sugarcane weed control research and specific sugarcane weed control recommendations can be viewed at www.lsuagcenter.com/weedscience under "Related Publications".*

# THE BATON ROUGE LINE

By Tom Spradley
Spradley and Spradley

## Governor Blanco's Early Moves - Blanco Builds a Team

Governor Blanco's first significant actions as Governor were true to her campaign promises about focusing on economic development issues. Visits with industrial prospects included a visit with a manufacturing company looking at Texas and Oklahoma as well as Louisiana and insiders report that the Louisiana presentation by the Governor and Department of Economic Development officials was very professional and impressive.

Another move was a defense move. A large, people intensive, insurance operation in Monroe with over a thousand employees is considering a relocation to some other area in what the company calls a consolidation effort. Such a hit could be very severe to the Monroe economy. Blanco is said to be doing everything she can to save the situation.

Other economic development actions are consuming a great deal of her time and it is revealing that she is using her time for these things and letting the political aspects of installing "her team" in Baton Rouge slide a bit. The Governor seems to be very serious about developing jobs. Repeatedly in her campaign she said "jobs are the answer" to most of the state's problems and she is showing she meant it.

**Blanco Builds a Team**

Legislative leadership under Blanco does not look as different from the Foster group as might have been expected. Representative Joe Salter, from Florien, has been elected Speaker of the House to replace strong Foster ally Charlie DeWitt and Senator Don Hines, from Bunkie, has been chosen as Senate President to replace John Hainkel who was also a strong Foster man. Salter has no known enemies and has always gotten along with the last administration. Not particularly so with Hines. Senator Hines, always a populist and never shy has at times taken the Foster plans to task.

Committee chairmen are still being worked out in the Senate but in the House 12 of the 17 seats are not changed. Senator Francis Heitmeier will take over the Senate Finance committee, which passes the budget and Rep. John Alario will chair the corresponding committee in the House where the budget bill must start. Both of these chairmen hail from New Orleans.

More on the committee structure in the next issue.

# ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

By James F. Coerver, P.E.
G.E.C., Inc.

## Status Report

As election year 2004 begins, it seems as though environmental affairs are in a deep freeze, much like the weather in the northeast. Near hundred below zero temperatures were reported in New England where weather that cold had not been recorded in over 50 years. One television wag reported last night that Al Gore had to cancel a speech on global warming. Maybe it wasn't a joke.

As reported here often, President Bush has been taking heat from environmentalists and other malcontents for not supporting the carbon dioxide reductions called for in "Al Gore's" Kyoto Accord on Global Warming treaty which was, by the way, firmly rejected by the Senate before Bush took office. That "Kyoto Treaty" is absolutely dead anyway, because Russian participation is an essential component and President Putin has firmly rejected any such action. In spite of the actual futile situation, some U.S. Congressmen keep pushing for mandatory carbon dioxide reductions in the U.S., and in 2003 such a reintroduced bill picked up more votes than in prior years, indicating more Senators are pandering to the environmentalists and other anti-business interests. It should be interesting to see if there is any of this "global warming" claptrap brought up in the upcoming New Hampshire primary, where voters are now up to their armpits in snow and ice and maybe wish there would be a little warming.

Energy, particularly that related to the combustion of fossil fuels, is blamed for most of the carbon dioxide-global warming apparition. Adequate energy supply is an essential for economic stability, and right now this country is dependent on uncertain, unstable and overpriced foreign oil sources, a situation which must be corrected ASAP. Nevertheless, environmentalists are adamantly opposed to the "energy bill" sponsored by the Administration and which was approved by a wide margin in the House of Representatives in November 2003. The energy bill being pushed by the Administration encourages development of domestic energy resources including renewable energy sources such as bio-fuels (bagasse, wood chips, rice husks, etc.). Opposing senators were able to postpone a vote in the Senate before year-end adjournment. Environmentalists oppose any attempt to increase or accommodate coal and petroleum production in the United States even though absolutely essential until such time as other energy sourses can be developed satisfactorily. Don't dare mention non-polluting nuclear power as an alternative. With natural gas prices now in the stratosphere, and oil prices headed there, maybe home-for-the-holiday senators are getting an ear-full from freezing, financially strapped constituents. One clue is that Senator Daschle, a leading opponent, offered to deliver enough votes to pass the energy bill if only the MTBE provisions were removed from the bill.

MTBE is a gasoline additive that was required by Congress and the EPA to be used in lieu of ethanol in order to reduce pollution emissions from motor vehicles. MTBE is now found in ground and surface water supplies in many places, particularly where gasoline has leaked or spilled. Environmentalists are now suing oil refiners and marketers (deep pockets) for all they can get.

The energy bill under consideration mandates elimination of MTBE and requires additional use of ethanol in fuels, which is strongly favored by corn growing states such as South Dakota where Senator Daschle is from. The energy bill contains a provision that exempts refiners and marketers from liability for merely having obeyed the law by producing and using MTBE in the gasoline. It does not exempt anyone from liability for a gasoline or MTBE spill or other environmental transgression, and the MTBE exemption is an essential ingredient of existing support for the bill. Therefore, it seems unlikely that the MTBE exemption will be removed from the bill. It is more probable that the bill will come up in the Senate "as is," and if Senator Daschle and other corn-state senators vote against it, let them face the wrath of offended local agricultural interests at election time in November.

Another important law in the environmental deep-freeze is EPA's recently promulgated New Source Review (NSR) rule. This is the rule that allows repair or improvement of old emission sources provided there is no increase in emissions. Environmentalists oppose such repairs, hoping to force early abandonments, especially of electric power plants, regardless of devastating economic and social consequences. Environmentalists have sued to overturn this rule, and until the matter is finally settled in Court or Congress, this rule is on hold.

Yet another matter of interest that seems to be frozen in time at least, is the long awaited boiler rules. A draft rule was promulgated by EPA a year ago, but work on the final version is still incomplete. The latest information we have is that all but one minor problem is resolved and that a final rule is expected before the end of February 2004. Nevertheless, just prior to Christmas 2003, a group of Louisiana environmentalists including the infamous Tulane Law Clinic sued EPA because of delayed rules promulgation. This suit is meaningless as far as the boiler rules are concerned, but grandstand plays are not unusual for environmentalists.

Ah yes, politics can be interesting - sometimes.

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Volume 82, No. 6 March 2004

# THE SUGAR BULLETIN

Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A.

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The mission of the American Sugar Cane League is to sustain success through effective research, positive legislation, public relations/promotion, and education.

# The Sugar Bulletin

The Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A., Inc.

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# UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

AMERICAN SUGAR CANE LEAGUE
OF THE U.S.A., INC.
206 East Bayou Road, Thibodaux, LA 70301

Phone: (985) 448-3707 FAX: (985) 448-3722

February 20, 2004

Dear League Members,

Our President and General Manager Charlie Melancon has announced effective today that he is resigning his position in order to run for Congress in the Third Congressional District. Until now, Charlie has been exploring this possibility and after receiving much positive feedback has decided to run.

A search committee will be formed immediately to begin the process of hiring a new General Manager to replace Charlie. With the many critical issues facing our industry, it is important to move quickly with this search. At the same time, we intend to seek out and find the most talented and qualified individual possible.

In order to provide for a smooth transition, board member Jerry McKee of Thibodaux has agreed to serve without compensation as interim General Manager. Jerry has vast experience in all areas of league activities having served as National Legislative Chairman and Chairman of the Board of Directors. He has also continuously served on the executive committee for many years. The Board is most grateful to Jerry for taking on this responsibility and we all pledge to him our support.

Charlie Melancon has served this industry tirelessly for the past eleven years. During his tenure he has provided leadership for the negotiation and passage of two farm bills, for the NAFTA negotiations, for the disaster assistance following the 2002 crop, and recently for the campaign to exclude sugar from the CAFTA. Additionally, Charlie worked successfully on the state and national level to secure excess weight permits for cane hauling.

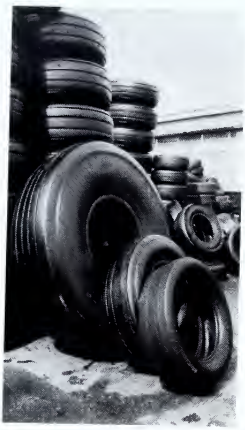
For these and enumerable other accomplishments on behalf of this industry, we thank him and wish him success in his bid for Congress.

Sincerely yours,

*John F. Gay*

John F. Gay
Chairman of the Board

JFG:nbn



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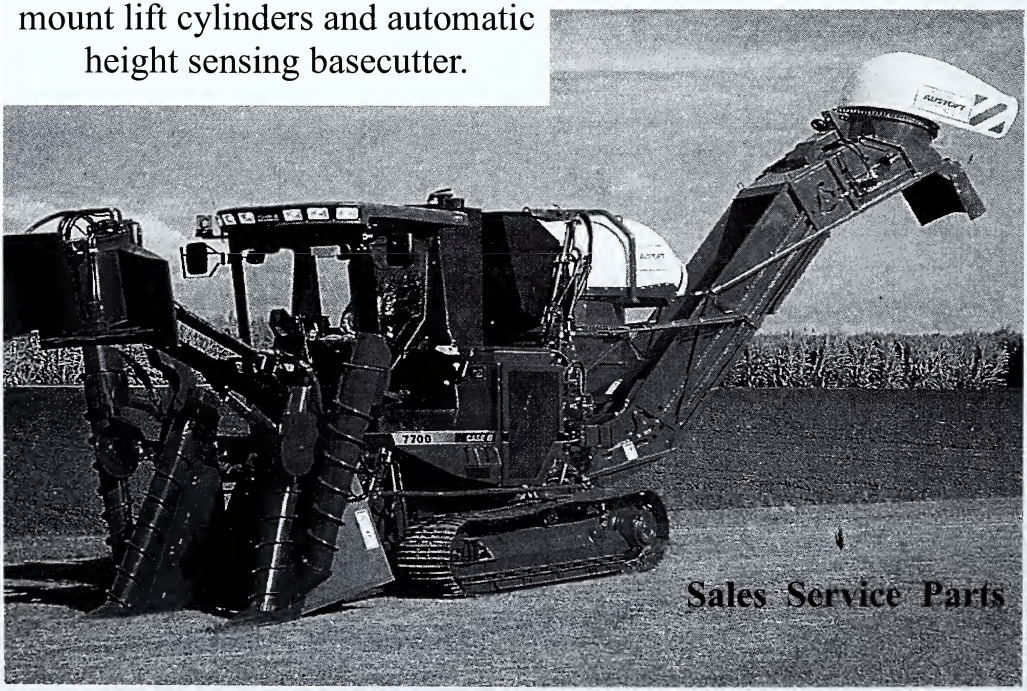

# WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

## Mixed News On Trade - Energy Bill Stalled, Maybe Another Titan Announces Retirement Intentions USDA WASDE February Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

In January, the Administration completed negotiations with Costa Rica, but the delay in completing negotiations with the Dominican Republic has caused a snag in the plans to send the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) to Congress. The sugar industry representatives in Washington have held weekly strategic planning sessions over the past month and have interviewed issues consultants to assist in streamlining and centralizing the efforts of the industry to fight the agreement as negotiated.

There was good news on the trade front this month, as the US and Australia completed negotiations on a trade agreement that does not include any changes in sugar import levels or policies with the fourth largest foreign supplier of sugar to the US market. The industry has written U.S. Trade Ambassador Robert Zoellick urging that USTR's sugar position in the Australian talks should be a template for future FTA negotiations.

As usual, Louisiana's congressional delegation has shown leadership in elevating the sugar trade issue as an essential issue to the many hard-working people employed in the Louisiana sugar industry. In recent weeks, Congressman David Vitter has announced his opposition to CAFTA, while Congressmen Richard Baker and Chris John have made strong and reasoned responses to misinformed attacks from editorial boards and syndicated columnists in the major media markets.

### Energy Bill Stalled, Maybe

Senate leadership stripped the energy bill down to $14 million in an attempt to approve at least part of the original package in mid-February but it remains unclear as to whether this move will garner more votes than it loses.

One item of concern has arisen regarding the ethanol mandates contained in the bill. At least one legal reading of the bill suggests that simple sugars may be inadvertently excluded from the mandate. We will continue to follow this process and report back any new information next month.

### Another Titan Announces Retirement Intentions

Rep. Billy Tauzin announced earlier this month that he will not seek re-election. While rumors continue to swirl regarding the potential for early retirement to take a job in the private sector, perhaps fed by his simultaneous announcement that he would resign as chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee in the House, it is clear that Louisiana will be losing another outstanding political warrior in the coming months. For those of us who have worked with

Congressman Tauzin and Senator Breaux in the Capitol Hill trenches, and who have come to rely on these two titans for leadership in their respective houses and political parties, these retirement announcements were occasions for joy and sadness. Tauzin and Breaux have so skillfully led the industry fight for so many years that we cannot help but feel a sense of loss at the passing of an era, yet we are excited for the opportunities that each will have to enjoy life in the private sector. They have certainly earned it.

**USDA WASDE February Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released**

The USDA released its February World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. Estimated U.S. sugar production for fiscal year 2002/03 was unchanged at 8,380,000 short tons (raw value), with beet production remaining at 4,415,000 and cane production at 3,965,000 short tons. Louisiana production for 2002/03 was lowered by another 20,000 to 1,369,000. 2002/03 total imports were raised slightly to 1,732,000 from 1,720,000 short tons, with imports under TRQ rising 12,000 to 1,212,000 short tons. Total supply was at 11,531,000, up from 11,526,000, and 2002/03 exports were unchanged at 142,000 short tons. Ending stocks fell to 1,259,000 from 1,304,000 short tons and 2002/03 ending stocks-to-use was lowered to 12.3 percent from 12.8 percent in January.

2003/04 production was decreased to 8,930,000 from 8,948,000 short tons last month, with beet production falling to 4,824,000 from 4,852,000 and cane production increasing slightly to 4,106,000 from 4,097,000 short tons last month. Louisiana cane sugar production was unchanged at 1,472,000 short tons. 2003/04 total supply was projected to fall to 11,773,000 from 11,836,000 in January. Lower sales under re-export were offset by higher sales for domestic uses, resulting in no changes to total uses at 9,835,000 short tons. Ending stocks were decreased to 1,938,000 from 2,001,000 short tons, resulting in a decrease in the stocks-to-use ratio to 19.7 percent from 20.3 percent last month.


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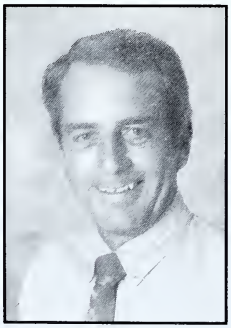

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By Windell Jackson

# Biotechnology and the Louisiana Breeding Program

Over the previous months and years, articles in the Sugar Bulletin have outlined advances in sugarcane genomic research. For about 12 years, the League has supported genomic research into sugarcane. Because of the extremely high cost associated with genomic research, no one sugarcane-producing region could carry the cost by themselves. Due to this prohibitive cost, the International Consortium of Sugarcane Biotechnologists was formed. The initial basic research (e.g. the mapping of the genome and marker development) was conducted by the ICSB. As discoveries directly linked to the sugarcane genome began to trickle out of the research conducted by ICSB, the molecular researchers at the two Louisiana sugarcane-breeding stations were able to apply the research results to projects that affect this industry directly.

The biotechnologists and breeders (Dr.'s Yong-Bao Pan, Tom Tew, and John Vermis) at the USDA-ARS, SRRC Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA are developing genetic markers for Louisiana's varieties of cane. Because these markers are unique for each variety as fingerprints are unique for each human, this process is called variety fingerprinting. The ability to genetically fingerprint a variety and its offspring is a valuable tool for the breeding program. No matter how many precautions are taken to make sure that the female tassels are pollen-sterile, there are always a number of self-crosses. Additionally, there is unwanted cross-pollination. However, if fingerprinted while seedlings are still in the greenhouse, they can be screened and undesirable individual seedlings or even whole crosses can be culled. With this early selection technique, undesirable plants/crosses will not occupy the limited space of either of the two research stations' greenhouses or fields. The process has the potential to reduce both the length required to evaluate a new variety along with reducing the cost of producing new varieties.

Dr. Collins Kimbeng, Dept. of Agronomy, LSU AgCenter is also doing some genetic work with sugarcane. The following is an outline of one of Dr. Kimbeng's projects.This project, which is in its initial stage, is being conducted in conjunction with Dr. Keith Bischoff and Dr. Kenneth Gravois of the St. Gabriel Sugarcane Research Station, LSU AgCenter. Dr. Kimbeng composed the following informational article.

*Variety development, although painstakingly slow, labor intensive, and an expensive process, remains central to the long-term survival of*

*most crop commodities and sugarcane is no exception. Research to facilitate the Sugarcane Improvement Program is on-going at the LSU AgCenter with efforts to adapt research findings and novel technology to the program.*

*Molecular markers are like highway signs on a road. Once linked to a trait of interest, their presence or absence in a plant or population of plants can help point researchers in the right direction. Modern techniques such as Marker-Assisted Selection (MAS) can serve as a useful tool to reduce the substantial inputs of time, money, and labor in sugarcane variety development. MAS is based on the premise that if we find markers that are closely linked to traits and, therefore, genes of interest (e.g. sucrose, yield, disease resistance), we can select for these markers early in the breeding program (for example the seedling stage). MAS was heralded in the last decade as a new technique that was destined to reduce these substantial inputs of time, money, and labor during variety development. However, until recently, the MAS concept had not been implemented in the breeding of crop plants. This was in spite that the MAS concept had been demonstrated to work for model species.*

*The first step in analyzing any genome is the generation of genetic maps that represent the linear order of DNA markers along the chromosomes. Once the genomic maps are available, the DNA markers can be used to identify the chromosomal locations of genes responsible for traits. The chromosomal location of the gene for a trait is identified (mapped) by genetic linkage analysis, in which subsets of the markers are statistically analyzed for co-inheritance with the trait in appropriate pedigrees. Once regions of these genomes that contain genes of interest have been accurately mapped (e.g. linked to competent markers), this information is invaluable in identifying candidate genotypes carrying these genes (or co-segregating with these markers) in the breeding population.*

*To implement MAS in a Sugarcane Improvement Program would require the genotyping of thousands of sugarcane seedlings for the presence or absence of bands generated by competent markers and would involve the following steps:*

1) *The extraction of DNA from each seedling,*
2) *The Polymerase Chain Reaction is utilized to amplify portions of the genome in each sugarcane seedling giving rise to DNA bands that depict genetic differences between these seedlings,*
3) *The PCR product is run on a gel where the bands are differentiated based on size,*
4) *The gel is then developed using radioactivity or silver staining techniques so they can become visible,*
5) *Sorting for the presence or absence of bands of different sizes.*

*To fully exploit the MAS concept, molecular analysis of literally thousands of bands generated on thousands of sugarcane seedlings is required. Using current technologies, the maximum capacity for our research program from steps 1 to 5 is estimated to be 2 gels per week for 90 genotypes per week, per marker. Recent advances in instrumentation technology have now put MAS within the reach of breeding programs. These Automated DNA Analysis Systems can capture and analyze thousands of DNA bands simultaneously, essentially combining Steps 3, 4, and 5 into one automated step. With the advent of these machines MAS is slowly finding its place into crop improvement programs. Sugarcane remains a recalcitrant crop to breed because of its complicated genetics and large genome size. But, the advent of these machines is poised to increase the pace of gene discovery in sugarcane research and to accelerate the implementation of MAS in the sugarcane breeding program.*

As the databases are established and enlarged by fingerprinting of parental varieties and by developing markers for traits of importance for Louisiana varieties, the breeding program will make great strides. The use of these two procedures will not only help to improve the production of sugar, but should be very useful in the development of other alternative bio-products from cane.

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[1] Preharvest interval of 140 days in sugarcane established under Special Local Need 24(c) Label for the state of Louisiana.

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# MILLING AROUND

By Dr. Peter Rein
Audubon Sugar Institute
Louisiana State University AgCenter

## Education and Training of Engineers for the Sugar Industry

Audubon Sugar Institute (ASI) is finalizing arrangements for short courses in 2004 and is about to start a new semester teaching a course in the College of Engineering on Sugar Process Engineering for the third time. Both these efforts are part of our broader initiative to provide relevant education, training and continuing education for the sugar industry.

The Louisiana sugar industry is facing new threats of tougher competition due to the possibility of increased imports of sugar into the US. In order to ensure on-going profitability, we all have to work smarter. One of the components in an overall strategy aimed at lowering the cost of production is to sharpen our skills. The best sugar companies in the world are generally those with the best people, those who are knowledgeable, skilled and experienced. Part of Audubon's mission is to assist in achieving a high level of competency within the sugar mills.

The ways in which this can be achieved are as follows:

(1) Provide formal sugar processing teaching within engineering degrees at LSU.
(2) Assist with the training of young engineers in the mills.
(3) Provide continuing education opportunities through short courses.
(4) Improve the technology transfer process, making knowledge available through seminars, reports and the web site.

**Formal course work at LSU**

The ideal graduate engineer for the sugar industry has a strong grounding in the basic science and engineering disciplines, with a specialization in sugar processing as part of an engineering degree. This can provide everything that the sugar company wants and overcomes the aversion of students to an industry-oriented degree that leaves them less marketable. It is possible to do this through the option of a minor in sugar engineering, through the LSU College of Education.

*Sugar Engineering Courses*

ASI is not an academic department and so new courses were introduced through the Department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering. They are BE4342: Sugar Process Engineering, which teaches all the background to sugar processing, and BE4347: Sugar Factory Design, which goes into the greater depth and detail required in equipment design in a factory.

*Minor in Sugar Engineering*

The objective of this program is to produce a graduate suited to the operation and management of a sugar-producing facility. The student is encouraged to work as a part-time student at ASI, gaining maximum exposure to sugar processing at every opportunity.

A set of courses has been prescribed so that students studying biological, chemical or mechanical engineering may be able to earn a minor in sugar engineering, by choosing the two sugar courses described above and their

electives to meet the requirements. If possible the student should also choose a design project in a sugar engineering related topic which would be overseen by the staff of the Audubon Sugar Institute.

Another option involves spending the fall semester at an operating sugar mill, using this period as an internship, yielding 3 credit hours. One of our students has done this with beneficial effects both for the student and the sugar mill concerned.

*Masters in chemical, mechanical or biological engineering, specializing in sugar engineering.*

This is targeted at people who have a first degree and wish to gain some specific sugar processing expertise through further study. Following the thesis option, the master's academic requirements include the sugar process engineering and sugar factory design courses. Depending on the first degree of the individual concerned, he or she would be encouraged to choose electives appropriate to building a strong sugar expertise.

A thesis is required, related to a relevant sugar-processing topic. In all cases, the student is encouraged to take on a research assistantship in ASI for the duration of his course.

**Training of Graduate Engineers**

A young engineer, particularly a new graduate may have the required knowledge but lacks the workplace experience to take on a responsible job and make an immediate contribution. A period of training is required, in which the young engineer gets exposed to the practical aspects of an engineering career and learns the skills required in managing people, money, and material resources.

Training of young engineers is a time consuming task for factory management people. There is perhaps a need for the development of an industry-wide training program ensuring that new graduates get the required experience so that they can be given responsibility at an early stage. Audubon could play a part in designing a program together with industry and in providing some of the mentoring necessary in executing the programs.

The advantages of a formal system of training in this way are many. Firstly, the trainee feels good about the fact that the company is investing time in his career, secondly, he becomes more quickly able to make a real contribution to the company and hopefully avoids making mistakes through ignorance that cost the company money and finally is empowered to do the best job that he is capable of doing.

**Audubon Short Courses**

The total training and education effort needs to take account of all technical employees in a sugar mill. This includes skills-based training for operators, training for non-technologists and in-depth training for engineers. Some of these are catered through short courses run at ASI. These may be categorized as:

- Overview courses
- Operator skills courses
- Specialized courses on specific topics

ASI has offered a number of short courses over the years, and continues to do so. Use is made of ASI pilot plant facilities to enrich these courses. These have met with success and efforts are made continuously to identify the particular areas these courses should cover. The courses offered are displayed on the ASI web site at (www.lsuagcenter.com/audubon).

In the last few years, we have augmented the course offerings by importing experts from around the world to help us. Thus in the past 2 years we have had experts on boiler design and operations, milling and cane preparation, and vacuum pan control share their knowledge and experience with us. We propose to continue this effort, and this year will be getting an outside expert on syrup clarification.

These courses qualify as continuing education courses for registered professional engineers. AIChE are registered providers of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses, and they have agreed to certify these courses.

**Technology transfer**

We are still trying to find the best ways to channel as much good and useful information to sugar processors as we can. Some of the things being done are:

- Scheduling routine visits to all the mills in-season and during the off-crop. This ensures that we get to talk to and visit all the processors, and discuss issues of interest and assess where Audubon can be of assistance.
- Issuing a monthly report, giving an outline of our activities, and hopefully presenting some of the more interesting findings from our research projects.
- Formally presenting the results of our League sponsored projects at our annual Operations Day.
- Using the Audubon web-site as a communication medium, both for analytical results and as a source of technical information. This effort has started, but should be fully developed during 2004.
- We propose to start a few morning or day long seminars each year, focusing on a particular topic of interest, and getting contributors from the mills and from researchers on various aspects of the seminar topic.

**Quo Vadis?**

Enrollment in our Sugar Process Engineering course by undergraduate and graduate students has only numbered about 10 each year. A number of the students are from other sugar producing countries around the world. We really need more students from Louisiana to be enrolled, who will stay on and make their careers here. We need the support of the Louisiana industry to promote, locate and if necessary sponsor students.

There has been some resistance to employing graduate engineers in the sugar industry. Some of them start and they leave after a year or two. An effort to train them formally should help to retain them by securing their commitment and putting them more quickly into a position where they feel that they are making a contribution.

The best ways in which we can offer continuing education and transfer technology to the industry have not yet been established. We continue to look for the ways to achieve this, and look to the industry to help and guide us to make information transfer useful and effective.

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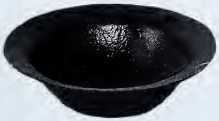

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# *2004 (2002 CROP) LOUISIANA SUGARCANE HIGH YIELD AWARD WINNERS*

## *Top 20 Sugar Producers*

| *Rank* | *Grower* | *Acres* | *S/A* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Martin & Poche, Inc. | 716.0 | 7,813 |
| 2. | G & L Farms | 1,087.7 | 7,758 |
| 3. | St. Rose Farms, Inc. | 183.7 | 7,707 |
| 4. | Engemann Farms | 1,564.6 | 7,630 |
| 5. | David Self | 251.0 | 7,586 |
| 6. | Winsley St. Pierre & Sons | 553.2 | 7,388 |
| 7. | Glynn Rivet | 4,091.8 | 7,373 |
| 8. | Blanchard Farms, Inc. | 701.7 | 7,254 |
| 9. | Kernie Gros Farms | 904.7 | 7,189 |
| 10. | Landry Farms | 987.5 | 7,171 |
| 11. | Boudreaux Enterprise RJB, LLC | 912.3 | 7,009 |
| 12. | Woods Farm, Inc. | 1,775.3 | 6,960 |
| 13. | J & R Robert, Inc. | 951.6 | 6,847 |
| 14. | LeJeune Brothers | 548.9 | 6,798 |
| 15. | Bobby & Lester Gravois | 1,562.8 | 6,778 |
| 16T. | A & B Farms | 658.0 | 6,728 |
| 16T. | Gravois Farms | 2,489.4 | 6,728 |
| 17T. | Ricky Rivet | 172.5 | 6,716 |
| 17T. | Roussel Farms, Inc. | 719.0 | 6,716 |
| 18. | Blackberry Farms, Inc. | 1,475.5 | 6,692 |

## *PARISH WINNERS*

| *Parish* | *Grower* |
|---|---|
| Ascension | J & R Robert, Inc. |
| Assumption | Blanchard Farms, Inc. |
| East Baton Rouge | R & E Poche |
| Iberia | Lejeune Brothers |
| Iberville | Glynn Rivet |
| Lafourche | Bobby & Lester Gravois |
| St. Charles | Dean A. Gravois |
| St. James | Martin & Poche, Inc. |
| St. John | Winsley St. Pierre & Sons |
| St. Martin | Melancon SC Farms |
| St. Mary | Blanchard Bros., Inc. |
| Pointe Coupee | G & L Farms |
| Terrebonne | Rebecca Plantation, Inc. |
| West Baton Rouge | Kernie Gros Farms |

# DISTRICT WINNERS - 2002
## 1st & 2nd Place Winners

### TECHE DISTRICT

| Category | Acres | 1st Place Winner | 2nd Place Winner |
|---|---|---|---|
| I | 100-299.9 | No Entries | No Entries |
| II | 300-699.9 | LeJeune Bros. | Patch Farms, LLC |
| III | 700-1,499.9 | Blanchard Bros., Inc. | Fabian LeMaire, Jr., Inc. |
| IV | 1,500+ | Northside Planting Co., LLC | Melancon SC Farms |

### RIVER/ BAYOU LAFOURCHE DISTRICT

| Category | Acres | 1st Place Winner | 2nd Place Winner |
|---|---|---|---|
| I | 100-299.9 | St. Rose Farms, Inc. | Keith Zeringue |
| II | 300-699.9 | Winsley St. Pierre & Sons | A & B Farms |
| III | 700-1,499.9 | Martin & Poche, Inc. | Blanchard Farms, Inc. |
| IV | 1,500+ | Glynn Rivet | Woods Farm, Inc. |

### NORTHERN DISTRICT

| Category | Acres | 1st Place Winner | 2nd Place Winner |
|---|---|---|---|
| I | 100-299.9 | David Self | Ricky J. Rivet Farms |
| II | 300-699.9 | Kenny Self | R & E Poche |
| III | 700-1,499.9 | G & L Farms | Kernie Gros |
| IV | 1,500+ | Engemann Farms | Joe Beaud, III Farms |

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***(2) Reynolds 14-C Dirt Buckets*** w/hyd/electric controls - $12,500 each; ***JD 690B Trackhoe*** good undercarriage, pump, engine - $16,500. Call (318) 201-5790.

***1997 Cameco 2500 Combine*** - $70,000.00; ***Reynolds 14C Scraper*** repinned and painted - $11,000; ***JD 235 Disc*** 21' - $2,500; ***JD 1630 Disc*** 16' - $1800. Call John Gay (225) 687-3683 or (225) 776-2241.

***Wholestalk Cane Trailers*** located in Napoleonville. Various sizes ranging from 38'-45'. Starting at $1,500. Call Will Thibaut at (985) 637-5753.

***Austoft combine,*** 1997 model, 3200 hours, 250 hrs. on complete undercarriage, shed kept, owner operated - $72,500; ***Quality High Dump Wagons***, 1999 models, perfect condition - $13,500. Call to negotiate, will sell. (318) 359-2222 (cell) or (318) 985-2451.

***1996 Case 7700 Combine,*** has 6004 hrs, new 4 blade anti-vortex fan, new 12" differential chopper system; 3300 HP Cummins engine. ***(3) Broussard High Dump Wagons,*** Model 4408, 14.00x 24 tires, 2 rams; ***(2) Light John Deere 3-rows; Cane Row Marker*** with four plows and two Roller Cone Row Markers. Contact Mark Callegan at (225) 545-8348 (night) or (225) 776-0989 (day).

***1982 Cameco Two Row Harvester*** - cab & air, excellent condition - $20,000 or best offer; ***3-row - Row Marker*** - $1,000; ***3-Row Lilliston Cultivator*** - $800; ***10' Chisel Plow*** - $500; ***18' Hydraulic Do-All*** - $800; ***Cameco Direct Haul Tandem Wagon*** - $1,500; ***Cameco Direct Haul Single Axle Wagon*** - $1,000; ***2-Drum Cane Planter*** - $1,500; ***3- Push Back Planters Aid*** - $450 - $1,000. Call John Falcon at (225) 473-6162 (home) or (225) 717-0296.

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**Volume 82, No. 7** **April 2004**

# THE SUGAR BULLETIN

**Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A.**

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The mission of the American Sugar Cane League is to sustain success through effective research, positive legislation, public relations/ promotion, and education.

# The Sugar Bulletin

The Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A., Inc.

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# UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

by Jerry McKee

## Allotments and Proportionate Share Acreage

On February 25, 2004 at the League's Annual Meeting, Chairman of the Board, John Gay said in his address to the membership *"Once again in 2004 our mills will operate under marketing allotments. The demand for sugar is down in the U.S. Observers blame the obesity issue and the fact that industrial sugar users are moving offshore to cut labor costs. Marketing allotments are in place to limit the supply of sugar. This program is designed to protect the price and prevent forfeitures of stocks to the government. I am afraid that much of our industry is not considering the real implications of marketing allotments on the 2004 crop. In a nutshell, if a mill produces above its allotment, that over production must remain in storage until the following fiscal year and then can only be sold if there is an offsetting under production by that mill. Neither the mill nor the growers get paid for the sugar. The time for decision making is today. The Louisiana sugar industry remains very competitive and efficient compared to other sugar producing states. Let us not lose that competitive edge by producing sugar that goes unsold. Growers and mills must work together on a voluntary basis to reduce acreage and prevent overproduction."*

Since that meeting, League Agronomists and other League staff have been asked numerous questions about allotments and proportionate share acreage. Accordingly, we are printing an explanation, written by Mr. Willie Cooper, State Executive Director, FSA, of the major points we all should understand to get a handle on allotments and proportionate shares:

1. *Mill allocations are in tons of sugar based on the criteria in the regulations.*
2. *Farm bases are in acres and based on farm serial number (FSN) history. The highest two year average of 1999-2000-2001. These are not rolling averages. The base will remain the same for the life of the legislation.*
3. *Mills cannot market in excess of their allocations when sugar marketing allotments are in effect without being subject to a penalty of three times the value of the excess sugar.*
4. *If the farm harvests in excess of their proportionate share and the mill markets in excess of its allocation, the farm would be subject to a penalty of one and one-half times the U.S. market value of the quantity of sugar that is marketed by the processor in excess of its allocation.*

*The penalty would be:*

- *(a) calculated at the processor level*
- *(b) be prorated among all producers on a farm that harvested sugarcane in excess of their farm's proportionate share.*

5. *If the mill does not exceed its allocation, it is permissible to total proportionate shares from all farms in determining fair and equitable.*
6. *In determining fair and equitable, the mill must pay in the following order:*
   (a) *pay proportionate share acres first*
   (b) *pay the difference between the proportionate share and the farm base acres*
   (c) *zero base acres and excess base acres*
   (d) *producers delivering to a mill with no previous production history at the mill for the years 1999, 2000 or 2001 will be considered as non-base production in determining fair and equitable.*
   (e) *if a mill cancels a producer's contract, they must allow the producer to transfer the production history to another mill of the producer's choice (which transfers allocation to the producer's new mill).*
7. *If allocation or sugar production history is transferred from one mill to another mill by the producer with approval of the farm owner(s) and both the transferring and receiving mill, the production will be handled under 6 a, b and c above.*

On March 18, 2004, we mailed out to all members of the League a copy of a study done by Dr. Mike Salassi of LSU titled "Preliminary Estimate of the 2004/05 Louisiana Sugar Marketing Allotment and Proportionate Share Acreage." This study was extremely well written and easy to understand.

It explains how the Overall Allotment Quota (OAQ) is computed down to a factor (%) that when applied to a farmer's base acreage (received by farmers from FSA in November, 2003) is equal to that farm's proportionate share acreage. This study uses the high and low OAQ recommendations of the U.S. Sugar Industry Groups recently given to the USDA. So if USDA follows those recommendations for the announced OAQ in September, you could apply those factors in the study to your farm base acreage and have an estimate of your farm's proportionate share acreage for the harvest in autumn 2004. This acreage will include that used for seed. We present this study to you again because of the importance of this matter:

*This article presents a preliminary estimate of the Louisiana sugar marketing allotment and the proportionate share acreage percentage for the 2004/05 marketing year. Estimates are presented for two overall allotment quantity (O.A.Q.) levels, which represent the approximate range of the projected O.A.Q. for next year. The March 10, 2004 WASDE report estimated 2003/04 U.S. sugar ending stocks at 1.952 million short tons, raw value, 55.2% higher than 2002/03 ending stocks level of 1.258 million short tons. Due to this higher ending stocks level, the projected overall allotment quantity (O.A.Q.) for 2004/05 should be lower than the effective O.A.Q. level for 2003/04 of 8,250,000 short tons. As a result, the 2004/05 O.A.Q. could be projected to be in the range of 7.7 million to 8.0 million short tons, raw value.*

*The table on the next page presents estimates of the 2004/05 Louisiana sugar marketing allotment and the proportionate share acreage percentage for two projected O.A.Q. levels. [1]For a 2004/05 O.A.Q. of 7,700,000 short tons, total cane allotment would be 3,515,050 tons. Mainland cane allotment would be 3,190,050 tons. Louisiana's share of this allotment would be approximately 1,276,020 tons. With this total state allotment, the proportionate share acreage would be 76.1% of adjusted state acreage base. [2] For a 2004/05 O.A.Q. of 8,000,000 short tons, total cane allotment would be 3,652,000 tons. Mainland cane allotment would be 3,327,000 tons. Louisiana's share of this allotment would be approximately 1,330,800 tons. With this total state allotment, the proportionate share acreage would be 79.4% of adjusted state acreage base.*

*Market factors can change between now and August which may alter these estimates. However, given the information currently available, these are reasonable estimates of what we might expect. USDA will officially announce the 2004/05 sugar program parameters, including the O.A.Q. level, no later than August 2004.*

| Item | Low O.A.Q.[1] | High O.A.Q.[2] |
|---|---|---|
| | *(short tons, raw value)* | |
| Projected 2004/05 O.A.Q. | 7,700,000 | 8,000,000 |
| Cane share of allotment (45.65%) | 3,515,050 | 3,652,000 |
| *Less* Offshore share | 325,000 | 325,000 |
| *Equals* Mainland cane allotment | 3,190,050 | 3,327,000 |
| ***Louisiana allotment*** (app. 40% of mainland cane allotment) | ***1,276,020*** | ***1,330,800*** |
| *Divided by* State per acre yield goal (tons/acre)(=6800 lbs. Sugar/ac) | 3.40 | 3.40 |
| *Equals* State acreage allotment (acres) | 375,678 | 391,806 |
| *Divided by* Adjusted state acreage base (acres) | 493,423 | 493,423 |
| *Equals* ***State proportionate share percent*** | ***76.1%*** | ***79.4%*** |

Now, if you are still reading this column and we haven't lost you yet, we want to remind you of something. The final allotments will not be announced until September. So this information is made available to help growers estimate your proportionate share acreage. But all you can do is estimate at this point.

It is imperative that growers co-ordinate their crop acreage with their processor. Each processor may have a different situation relative to their mill marketing allotment. This may affect their growers' allowable acreage. Some in the industry would like us to point out that the state proportionate share percent for the best crop was 84.2%. Growers and processors must work closely to avoid costly overproduction and underproduction problems.

The League is grateful to Dr. Mike Salassi and Mr. Willie Cooper for their valuable and insightful help on this issue.

Any developing information on allotments or proportionate share acreage will be shared with the membership in a timely manner.

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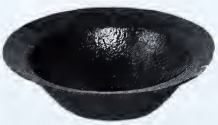

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# WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

## CAFTA Battle Stations - Budget/Appropriations Process Begins
## Energy Efforts Continue - Industry Requests Early OAQ Announcement
## USDA WASDE March Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The industry has completed its search for an issues coordinator for the ongoing CAFTA battle and the new coordinator group, DCI Group, is fine-tuning a strategic plan while receiving input from the industry on background issues and efforts to date in battleground states like Louisiana.

While Administration officials have signaled that CAFTA will not be sent to Congress for approval this year, the industry is in agreement that this is not a safe assumption and that our own efforts must be targeted during the upcoming political campaigns to maximize support for our position in opposition to the CAFTA, as negotiated. Whether the trade pact moves to Congress in 2004 or in 2005, our overall strategy must focus on building coalitions to oppose the trade deal whenever it moves.

**Budget/Appropriations Process Begins**

Congressional appropriators are preparing background materials for the annual appropriations efforts while House and Senate budget leaders continue to work on the overall budget blueprint for government spending. The overall budget negotiations must resolve differences on big ticket issues such as tax cuts and the extent to which spending on Iraq and other military and foreign aid needs, while budget leaders battle over the prospect of imposing new pay-as-you-go limits on spending. Resolution of these issues will have direct and potentially painful consequences on the size of the appropriations pie.

In this presidential election year, there will be immense pressure on the appropriators to approve spending bills by June, and to move those bills through the House and Senate before the August recess, but the major spending issues facing this Congress will not be easily resolved.

**Energy Efforts Continue**

Senate leadership continue to express hope that a pared-down energy bill can be passed by the Senate in late March, while House leadership continue to warn that any significant changes to the package negotiated in conference over the winter will be unacceptable to the House. While the Senate measure seems certain to include the ethanol/renewable fuels language approved in conference, the MTBE issue remains a sticking point in discussions between the two Houses of Congress. Regarding the ethanol mandates contained in the bill, report language may be included to clarify the role of sugar and molasses in the mandates.

**Industry Requests Early OAQ Announcement**

Following up on an industry letter to Undersecretary J. B. Penn in early March, the industry representatives met with Secretary Penn

in mid-March to urge him to expedite approval of a conservative Overall Allotment Quantity for the 2005 fiscal year. Penn expressed appreciation for the concerns of the industry and promised to review the issue further.

**USDA WASDE March Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released**

The USDA released its March World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. Estimated U.S. sugar production for fiscal year 2002/03 was lowered by 1,000 tons to 8,379,000 short tons (raw value), reflecting an identical reduction in USDA's Louisiana production estimate to 1,368,000. 2002/03 total imports were lowered to 1,730,000, from 1,732,000 short tons, as imports under TRQ fell 2,000 to 1,210,000 short tons. These changes are reflected in the drop in total supply to 11,528,000 from 11,531,000. 2002/03 exports were unchanged at 142,000 short tons. Ending stocks fell to 1,258,000 from 1,259,000 short tons and 2002/03 ending stocks-to-use was lowered to 12.2 percent from 12.3 percent in February.

Higher cane sugar output from Texas drove a 15,000 short ton increase in 2003/04 production to 8,945,000 from 8,930,000 short tons last month. Beet production was unchanged at 4,824,000 and total cane production increased to 4,121,000 from 4,106,000 short tons last month. Louisiana cane sugar production was unchanged at 1,472,000 short tons. 2003/04 total supply was likewise increased to 11,787,000 from 11,773,000 in February. Export sales were unchanged at 160,000 short tons and total uses remained at 9,835,000 short tons. Ending stocks were increased to 1,952,000 from 1,938,000 short tons, resulting in a 19.8 percent stocks-to-use ratio, compared to 19.7 percent last month.


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# ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

## Crop Report

The 2003-2004 winter months have been relatively mild. For much of the cane belt, temperatures did not drop below freezing long enough to kill all the eyes on the cane. As one looks at the stalks of cane that remain unharvested, it can be observed that the winter did not damage many of the lower eyes on the stalks. They appear to be in good enough condition that they could be used for planting. Many fields of 2003 planted cane that are located near water or tree lines were sheltered from the adverse effects of what few hours of freezing temperatures there were. These fields are green and the majority of the terminal buds are still growing. However, most fields had at least their terminal buds killed by the low temperatures. Within the last two or three weeks growers have been able to clip most of this dead regrowth. With the warm weather, the clipped fields have regained their green. After clipping, in some of the more advanced cane (cane which produced joints last fall and winter), much of the re-growth is coming from the sprouting of good eyes that are above ground. This has occurred in previous years when the winters were very mild. In these years where cane has grown from above ground eyes, no severe problems were reported because the majority of the cane stand came from below ground level to produce stalks for the mill or seed.

For the most part, growers are reporting good stands. There are a few fields of plant cane that were planted late, and these are somewhat slow in establishing stands. At this time, there are spots within fields that have very little cane marking the row. In the plant cane fields, most of these spots can be traced back to water damage. Most of these spots are associated with quarter drains that are slow to drain and other poorly drained spots in the field. Stubble fields also have their share of water-damaged spots. Additionally, some of the earlier harvested fields that were treated with Polado (6 oz. rate) are somewhat slow to establish stands. Cane that is showing in these fields is very puny, that is small and off color (white). But, with the warm weather and sunshine of the last week, the Polado treated fields are improving rapidly.

Fieldwork is proceeding at a nice pace. The last three weeks have been ideal for the drying of fields; that is, much bright sunshine with a cool-dry north wind. Growers are reporting that with the dry weather of March and with only a few fields rutted during the 2003 harvest, they are able to get into fields much sooner than expected.

As growers rush to get fieldwork done, they are urged to consider the effect of production controls on the Louisiana Sugar Industry. Under production controls, a mill may not be allowed to sell all of the sugar that it produces. Not only is there the possibility/probability that some of the sugar produced this year cannot be sold and will sit on the floor, but it will hang over the market. For the sugar section of the farm bill to work properly there must be a reduction in the pressure on the market. This can only be accomplished if there is a decrease in the amount of sugar in the marketplace. Before spending a lot of money, time, and effort on the production

of sugar that may not be sold during the upcoming crop, growers are urged to consult with their mill's management and get their thoughts and advice on how much cane they, as growers, should keep.

Because of a heavy debt load (much of which is due to the crops of 2002 and 2003) and a stagnant price, growers should not spend any more money than is absolutely required to produce this crop. In making decisions of what cane to keep and which fields to plow out, growers should consider the potential for profitability of a field before keeping it. If the field does not have potential to be profitable, it should be plowed. Early stands indicated that the 2003 crop had a great potential, however because it was so beat up by the adverse field conditions during the 2002 harvest, it did not make the tonnage that was indicated by early stands. Overall the 2003 crop was down by 10%. For the five years prior to the 2003 crop the state's average was somewhere around 33.5 tons of cane per acre, while the 2003 crop average was in the neighborhood of 30 tons. Again, it is the opinion of many that the low yields of last year's crop were a direct result of the muddy field conditions during the 2002 harvest. Previous experiences indicate that a low yielding field does not improve significantly in following years. Most of the crop (85-90%) is off to a very good start, but it is that slow starting 10 to 15% that growers must not be in too much of a rush to keep. For this year, even more than in previous year decisions should be based on profitability.

As stated earlier most fields with heavy amounts of growth have been clipped. After clipping many fields were burned to dispose of the clippings. Because of the density of these clippings, many growers were of the opinion that they could not do a good job in the application of their herbicides if the clippings were left in the middles. Because of the green material that was not killed by the freezing temperatures, along with this year's advanced growth, the pathologists are expecting an early heavy outbreak of rust. This year Dr. Jeff Hoy and Dr. Clayton Hollier who are with the LSU AgCenter will be looking at the effects of a cocktail mixture of fungicides on rust. They are checking to see if this mixture will prevent or even reduce infestations of rust under field conditions. They are not sure if it will have any effect on reducing the amount of rust or increasing yields. However, they are sure that there will be a big outbreak of rust...

Growers have been busy spraying and cultivating fields. Because of the early planting (August) and excessive rain during the winter, many fields of plant cane were becoming heavily infested with clover and other winter weeds. Some clover stands were so thick they had to be removed by cultivation or the application of a burn-down herbicide such as Gramoxone prior to the application of pre-emerge herbicides.

Many growers have started with their application of dry fertilizer. If the weather continues to stay nice, many of these growers will jump in to their application of nitrogen. Again, it is advised not to be in too much of a rush.

The Louisiana Sugar Industry is undergoing changes. For the first time in more than 40 years the industry is faced with the reality of production controls. The industry must make this change and must make decisions that are economically prudent for the industry and not just for individual mills or for individual growers.


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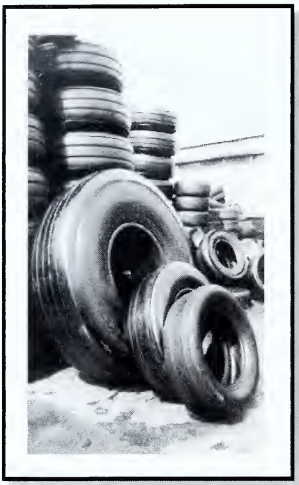

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# MILLING AROUND

By Dr. Peter Rein
Audubon Sugar Institute
Louisiana State University AgCenter

## Instrumentation And Automatic Control

We have a small committee in the Louisiana industry set up to promote the wider use of automatic control in the industry. It consists of Detlev Schlorke, Lucky Bouttee, Jacques Giraud, Scott Barrow and myself. This committee decided to hold a one day seminar on the topic, focused on the users of these systems, highlighting the opportunities and the problems.

Some very interesting discussions took place. We had a number of discussion leaders (Trevor Endres, Jimmy Taylor, Jimmy Carew, Michael Saska, Victor Fino, Mark Voisin as well as the committee) and the short presentations from these people were very good. We also invited an external consultant, Dr. Jim Ford from Picou Assoc. Inc., to give us an external view on the latest trends in automatic control.

Some of the mills have made some considerable progress in implementing automatic control. The most impressive and comprehensive is the Foxboro A/I system at Sterling. Jacques Giraud described the DCS (distributed control system) used there, highlighting the benefits and the drawbacks of the system. It was started in 1988/89 and has seen some significant changes and upgrades over time. The initial system was regarded as a second generation DCS and it is now operating as a third generation system, which is no longer a closed system and which can accommodate third party products connected to it. It requires a large initial capital outlay but covers 2118 points and 11 work stations. Thus, for a large system, the cost per point is in fact quite reasonable.

Enterprise has followed a different route, making use of Honeywell controllers and a Honeywell SCADA (supervisory control and data acquisition) system. The project is not yet complete and focuses more on achieving good process control rather than on automation purely to reduce the number of operators. Even in its first stage, it is considered that the throughput increase of 500 t/day achieved at Enterprise last season was largely due to this system.

The lowest cost option has been implemented at Lafourche. They have installed a Rockwell SCADA system, an open architecture which allows communication with a large number of different instruments in the plant. The impressive feature of this system is the wealth of information available on the system. Trending of data has

been invaluable and provides an excellent means of diagnosing the cause of problems and identifying cause/effect relationships in the plant.

The enormous advantage of better communication of information around the plant was highlighted by a number of people in the discussion. Electronic communication has reached the point where people at home can access the plant system. This adds a new dimension to after-hours call outs; it is now possible for an engineer to access the system at home, and possibly sort out the problem there without having to travel back to the mill. For all concerned with solving problems in a mill, the data available in this type of system is a huge help in identifying the causes.

Practical techniques for control of mill speeds, pan boiling, hot liming pH and filter operation were described. Mill speed and pan controls have both been responsible for improved effective capacity. Both St. James and Lafourche can show records of automatic pan boilings identical to each other, with no time lost due to varying pan conditions or the need to melt false grain. pH control at Enterprise is impressive with control within ± 0.2 units, virtually a straight line on the recorder. Consequences include reduced scaling and reduced line usage.

Filter automation at Cajun has reduced the pol % cake by 1%, making them the best performer in the industry, and giving a payback of the investment in 20 days! A big advantage too is the ease of operation of the new system.

A number of new measuring devices have been introduced into the industry and experience with these was highlighted. Better and more reliable measurements help to make control problems simpler and put good reliable instruments within viable economic reach. These instruments, together with the new electronic control hardware available, are making control systems increasingly more reliable.

The microwave density measurement systems are likely to find increasing use in evaporator Brix control and in pan control systems. They are less dependent on purity and temperature and have come down in price significantly.

What about the problems associated with an increasing commitment to automatic control? Perhaps the major problem identified is the need for trained technicians to implement and service the systems. To what extent should we as an industry be trying to provide this training? On balance the opportunities seem vast and the problems not insurmountable.

It is possible to draw some conclusions from the seminar. My impressions are as follows:

1. A great deal of good work on automatic control has already been done in the industry. It requires some effort on our part to ensure that it gets communicated in a forum of this type to the mills.
2. Electronic systems are now very versatile, powerful and reliable. They are far more user-friendly than they were in the past and can be configured and implemented by people already employed in the mills.
3. Most mills prefer the piece-meal approach, where the systems can be implemented piece by piece, sequentially, without a single large capital outlay.
4. Some of the control systems are showing tangible financial rewards, apart from the benefits which are not directly quantifiable such as better communications, better quality, reduced downtime, increased safety, reduced steam usage and reduced plant maintenance.
5. The good data communication capability no longer requires a single centralized control room and satellite stations around the plant work well.

The discussion generated at the seminar was good, and this suggests that the format of this type of seminar should be extended to other topics. Let us have your suggestions.

# THE BATON ROUGE LINE

By Tom Spradley
Spradley and Spradley

## DejaVu All Over Again
## Blanco Moves Tax Reform

It seems that every year taxpayers hear the weary story that once again Louisiana faces a $500 million shortfall. Governor Blanco is not exempt from that phenomenon. She is having a honeymoon session with a new legislature, but she can't avoid the circumstances, that drive the annual "shortfall" problem. Lets examine the shortfall and see why it seemingly cannot be fixed.

Every year when the state gears up for a new fiscal year in July, new prices kick in for governmental offices leased for the hundreds of governmental services statewide. This is typical business practice - rents go up.

Every year the state's payroll goes up even if you do not hire a single new person because of step increases for the 40,000 state employees. These are not "merit" increases, they are cost-of-living increases and they are built into the system.

Every two years taxes expire. These two-year taxes are a 2.8 percent tax on utilities that was first imposed by the Roemer Administration to help fill that year's $500 million shortfall. This tax brings in $160 million.

And revenue sources fluctuate. Health costs to the state are very sensitive to federal subsidies. Federal matches can be 3 to 1 or better and depending on our local needs the State can suffer real hits in federal bucks.

And there are hundreds of other small annoying reasons for budget stress.

So it's not like we are really doing anything wrong to experience this budget deja Vu; we are simply caught in a system that annually coughs up a $500 million shortfall.

**Blanco Moves Tax Reform**

In an effort to partially solve the budget shortfall problem, the Governor has pushed the idea of making the semi-temporary taxes on utilities for businesses permanent. Legislative resistance is understandable. This gives them a little leverage every two years with the Governor, who by most estimates is the most powerful Governor in the country.

But as of this writing, the tax bill currently being considered in Governor Blanco's first legislative session has reached a compromise. The two-year tax is being extended for five years and has attained the 2/3rds vote needed. At this point the bill has gone through three of the four steps to passage and the prospects are good on the floor of the Senate, the final step.

Some legislators from agricultural areas are concerned that the 2.8 percent sales tax on business utilities also taxes certain farm equipment, including irrigation wells equipment, as well as farm facilities to dry or store grain; and they are working to fix that situation.

# ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

By James F. Coerver, P.E.
G.E.C., Inc.

## Impending Water Problems

The abundance of rainfall experienced this winter makes water one subject that is on the minds of most everyone in the Louisiana sugarcane industry. Drenched fields are a problem for farmers anxious to prepare for the next crop, and sugar millers are concerned about overloading wastewater impoundments and causing untimely or excessive discharge. A week or two of good weather and most such short term water problems evaporate, but there are longer term water problems that are not going away so easily. One such problem is more stringent effluent limitations being imposed on the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) controlled wastewater discharges.

The more stringent water discharge limitations in the offing are a direct consequence of Clinton's EPA mandated Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) program, a frequent subject of this column over the last five years. The last report here on the TMDL situation was that TMDL waste load allocations could not be imposed on "non-point" sources of pollution, such as farms and forests, unless and until "watershed" based implementation plans are developed and lawfully promulgated by the state authority. The current EPA administration announced that it was working on a "Watershed Rule" that would provide guidance for preparing such implementation plans, but it is doubtful that adequate science and technology to support a workable rule will be available any time soon. Furthermore, it is most unlikely that such a controversial rule would be proposed during an election year. After January 2005, beware! That's the good news.

The bad news is that the TMDLs for many Louisiana watersheds are already established pursuant to an ill-advised order by a Federal judge acting on behalf of environmentalists who wanted TMDL waste load allocations made immediately even though the technical data needed to do the TMDL job properly could not possibly be available for many years. One stream where a TMDL is already in place is Bayou Teche, and its TMDL places specific limits on what sugar mills and other "point" sources on a watershed may discharge. That is bad news because EPA directives require that NPDES permits now being issued or re-issued shall impose effluent limitations that comply with TMDL waste load allocations after February 2006. This situation has come to pass without any forewarning to permittees, and no public notice of such policy change, to my knowledge.

Waste load allocations in a TMDL are based on a stream's "7-day 10-year low flow." Point sources discharging to the Mississippi River should have no problem with this, but discharges to the low flow Teche are going to

be reduced, and discharges to streams with no discernible 7-day 10-year flow face a dilemma.

Under the old rules, sugar mills were allowed to discharge to quality limited streams only if and when wastewater was sufficiently stabilized (treated) and oxygenated naturally or artificially to such an extent that discharge water alone in the stream would maintain stream water quality standards. Sugar mills so permitted usually built and maintained impoundments large enough to contain a year's flow of factory wastewater and stormwater runoff, and discharge only when impounded water is at peak quality in the spring and/or early summer. Current NPDES permits generally allow mills to discharge daily as much stabilized and oxygenated water as requested in an Application for Permit.

Under the current program, discharge will be limited to the daily amounts specified in a receiving stream's TMDL waste load allocation. In most cases, this will mean much less daily discharge than currently allowed. However, it is the amount of $BOD_5$ and suspended solids discharged per day that will be limited henceforth, and the volume limited only by the amount of $BOD_5$ and suspended solids carried. In other words, a small volume of higher strength wastewater can be discharged every day of the year, and much greater daily volume of discharge allowed when $BOD_5$ and suspended solids concentrations in the wastewater are low.

In some cases, the new NPDES situation can be handled with careful planning using a sugar mill's current pollution control assets, minor structural improvements and modified operating procedures. For instance, make use of the opportunity to discharge some water every day. However, discharging every day means daily effluent monitoring, significantly increasing manpower requirements and costs for sampling and laboratory analysis work. There are also costs involved in minimizing wastewater volume by reuse of cane wash and cooling waters.

The objective here is to encourage everyone to have an early look at their water management situation and be prepared to address these now expected problems in the most cost-efficient manner.


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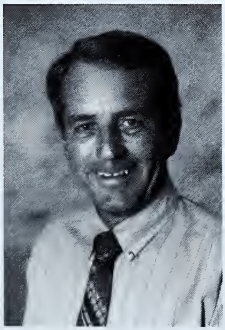

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**G & L Farms**

**Top 20 Producer**
**2nd Place**

**1st Place District**
**Acreage Winner -**
**Northern District**
**Category III**

**Parish Winner -Pointe Coupee**

Miles Brashier, Pointe Coupee County Agent; Marty Graham,; and Harry Laws, West Baton Rouge County Agent

**Engemann Farms**

**Top 20 Producer**
**4th Place**

**1st Place District**
**Acreage Winner**
**Northern District**
**Category IV**

Miles Brashier, Pointe Coupee County Ageny; Curt and Mark Engemann; and Harry Laws, West Baton Rouge County Agent

**David Self**

**Top 20 Producer**
**5th Place**

**1st Place District**
**Acreage Winner**
**Northern District**
**Category I**

Miles Brashier, Pointe Coupee County Agent; Kenny Self (for David Self); and Harry Laws, West Baton Rouge County Agent

Rene Schmidt, St. John County Agent; Reed and Ryan St. Pierre

**Winsley St. Pierre & Sons**

**Top 20 Producer**
**6th Place**

**1st Place District**
**Acreage Winner**
**River/Bayou**
**Lafourche District**
**Category II**

**Parish Winner -**
**St. John**

**Glynn Rivet**

**Top 20 Producer**
**7th Place**

**1st Place District**
**Acreage Winner -**
**River/Bayou**
**Lafourche District**
**Category IV**

**Parish Winner - Iberville**

Glynn Rivet and Harry Laws, West Baton Rouge County Agent

## Blanchard Farms, Inc.

**Top 20 Producer**
**8th Place**

**2nd Place District**
**Acreage Winner**
**River/Bayou**
**Lafourche District**
**Category III**

**Parish Winner -**
**Assumption**

Gene and Al Blanchard and Rick Louque, Assumption County Agent

## Kernie Gros Farms

**Top 20 Producer**
**9th Place**

**2nd Place District**
**Acreage Winner**
**Northern District**
**Category III**

**Parish Winner -**
**West Baton Rouge**

E.J. and Kernie Gros and Harry Laws, West Baton Rouge County Agent

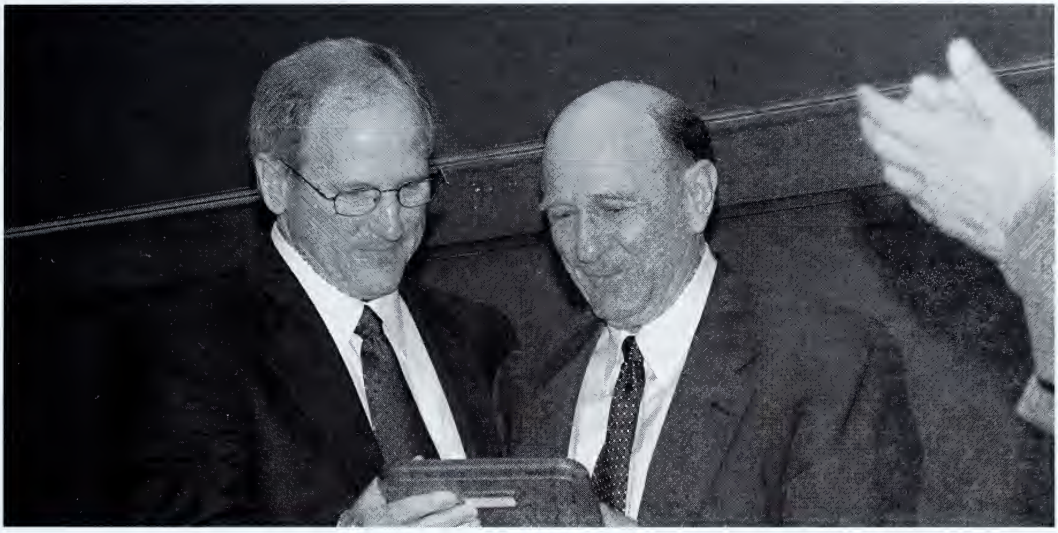
## Landry Farms

**Top 20 Producer**
**10th Place**

Raymond Rousseau and Rick Louque, Assumption County Agent

**No Photo Available for St. Rose Farms, Inc.**
**Top 20 Producer - 3rd Place**
**1st Place District Acreage Winner River/Bayou**
**Lafourche District Category I**

# Chairman of the Board John Gay Presents Awards at the League's Annual Meeting February 25, 2004



Jackie Theriot, right, receives the Chairman of the Board's Outstanding Member Award from John Gay, left

Charlie Melancon, former President and General Manager of the League, receives an award from John Gay, left, for his outstanding and dedicated service to the League for the past 11 years.

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Volume 82, No. 8 May 2004

# THE SUGAR BULLETIN

**Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A.**

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The mission of the American Sugar Cane League is to sustain success through effective research, positive legislation, public relations/promotion, and education.

# The Sugar Bulletin

The Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A., Inc.



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# UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

by John Gay & Jerry McKee

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## Formation and Purpose of the League
## The Purpose and Work of The American Sugar Cane League
## Proportionate Shares & Market Allotments (Again)

The League has been faced recently with difficult and divisive issues. Since most of us were not here when the American Sugar Cane League was formed, I felt it a service to you to include in this article the original text of the Call issued in the summer of 1922 which resulted in the formation of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A., Inc. It was written by Reginald Dykers, whose efforts brought about the appointment of the nine conferees and who secured their signatures to the Call.

This letter is framed on the wall in the League office.

*Dear Sir:*

*A strong and sincere desire to do what is best for our industry, regardless of sentiment, personalities or tradition, has led the different Associations of the Louisiana sugar industry to plan to come together as units in one big organization, called the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A.*

*In this new Association, the American Cane Growers' Association, the Louisiana Sugar Planters' Association, and the Producers' & Manufacturers' Protective Association (sugar planters' freight rate organization) will be merged together as units in one big mutually helpful plan.*

*A brief memorandum is enclosed of some of the proposed lines of work to be carried on by the new Association. It will do more than is set forth in this memorandum, as ideas and plans mature.*

*Every effort will be made to conduct a virile, active, efficient, always-on-the-job organization. We feel that you share with us the affection for our industry and the anxiety for its welfare that has led us all to "get together," and we are certain you will respond to the sentiment behind this movement - which- briefly stated - is "Our industry first."*

*A general meeting will be held on Friday, Sept. 29, 1922, at The St. Charles Hotel at 1 o'clock, to ratify and endorse the work of the conferees, drawn from each of the three existing Associations who have mapped out the plans for the merger, and at this meeting the proposed Charter and By-Laws of the new Association will be read and its officers and Executive Committee selected. The idea is to start with a clean slate and to enlist the good will and cooperation of all.*

*Please come; and bring with you any others interested in our industry whom you choose. The occasion is one of great importance, as the American Cane Growers' Association, the Louisiana Sugar Planters' Association and the Producers' & Manufacturers' Protective Association, while continuing to exist as legal entities are not expected to function actively hereafter, all of their work being carried on by the new organization. Hence you are very vitally interested.*

*Asking of you that you share and endorse and encourage the broad, patriotic, get-together spirit that has dictated this move, and that you will take an active part in launching it, we are,*

*Yours truly, (Signatures from the following)*

*(Conferees from La. Sugar Planters' Association)*

*(Conferees from American Cane Growers' Association)*

*(Conferees from Producers' & Manufacturers' Protective Association)*

**The Purpose and Work of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A., Inc.**

In the early 1990's the purpose and work of the League were written. It states:

*The American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A., Inc. is a non-profit organization of Louisiana sugarcane growers and processors. Incorporated in 1922, the Louisiana sugar industry was, at that time, threatened with extinction by cane diseases. The primary purpose of the organization at its inception was to provide the industry with an adequate research program to combat the decline of sugarcane yields.*

*Today, the League's main functions continue to be research, along with legislation, product promotion, education and public relations.*

*Research is the "life blood" of the sugar industry. The League has a long standing cooperative relationship with the United States Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Research Service and the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station. There are a number of memorandums of agreement covering various research projects in which all three agencies participate. An agreement dating back to 1926 under which new cane varieties are developed is still in effect.*

*The League is active in legislative matters on both national and state levels. In the nation's capital, the League works through its Washington Representative. When sugar legislation is to be considered by Congress, the various segments of the domestic sweetener industry meet, negotiate and upon reaching an agreement, make recommendations to Congress to collectively work for passage of favorable legislation. The League also represents Louisiana sugarcane growers and processors in other matters on the Federal level. State legislative matters which affect the sugar industry are monitored by the League's Baton Rouge Representative. The League works in cooperation with other agricultural and business interests to effectively enact state legislation beneficial to the industry.*

*Product promotion has recently become an important phase of the League's efforts. As a member of The Sugar Association, a Washington-based organization, the League works with other sugar interests to set forth the true health facts of sugar. The Sugar Association provides nationwide advertising through both print and television media to produce the correct sugar message to consumers. These efforts have been beneficial to growers and processors by reversing the downward trend in sugar consumption.*

*Education and public relations are ongoing activities of the League. "The Sugar Bulletin" is a monthly publication which goes to all members. Articles relating to research, farming and factory practices, a Washington legislative report, a Baton Rouge legislative report and many other articles of interest to the members are carried. The League staff, as well as League members, appear on television and radio broadcasts on behalf of the sugar industry. They also make presentations to schools, civic, professional and fraternal organizations.*

*The staff of the League is relatively small, since much of the work is done by committees composed of cane growers and processors who willingly give of their time in search of solutions to problems of the Louisiana sugar industry. The League is financed by dues paid by its cane grower, cane processor, landlord and commercial members. The League maintains its office at 206 East Bayou Road, Thibodaux, Louisiana 70301.*

Today, the League is striving to keep this industry, the Louisiana Sugar Industry, together as one trade organization. The sentiment stated in the first sentence of the Call letter of 1922, "A strong and sincere desire to do what is best for our industry, regardless of sentiment, personalities or tradition," represents to us a call to action today as it did 82 years ago.

**Proportionate Shares & Market Allotments (Again)**

Industry questions continue to arise about proportionate share acreage and market allotments. A number of people within the industry and within the USDA have spent considerable time "thinking up" possible questions that may arise as a result of proportionate shares and market allotments. They then have spent even more time struggling with possible answers to these questions.

Mr. Willie Cooper, State Director, FSA, in particular has spent countless hours talking to industry personnel and holding discussions and workshops throughout the cane belt.

Mill Managers and/or their representatives have been in attendance at many of these meetings. Generally, mill managers have as good an understanding of the problems associated with the administration of this program as anyone. For this reason and others mentioned in last month's column, we again most sincerely encourage all growers to stay in close communication with their processor. We need to co-ordinate our efforts to ensure that we all are paid in full for as much of this year's sugar production as possible. The ASCL owes a note of thanks to Mr. Willie Cooper for his tireless work and expertise in trying to help us all better understand the intricacies of a complicated program.

## Upcoming Dates to Remember

**American Society of Sugar Cane Technologist Joint Meeting** - June 16-18, 2004, St. Petersburg, FL. Go to www.assct.org for more information.

**Annual Contact Committee Meeting of the American Sugar Cane League** - June 30, 2004 (time to be announced), Howard Johnson Hotel, Envie Banquet Rooms, 203 East Bayou Rd., Thibodaux, LA

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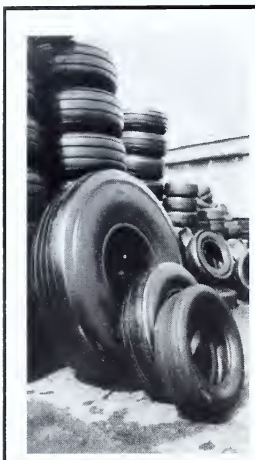

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# WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

## Trade Preparations Continue
## Budget/Appropriations Process Begins
## Energy Efforts Stymied - USDA Tightens 03/04 OAQ
## USDA WASDE April Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

In mid-April, ASA presented its views on the impact of CAFTA to the International Trade Commission. In that filing, ASA urged the ITC to look at the proposed CAFTA within the context of other FTA negotiations that are ongoing, rather than viewing the agreement in isolation. Viewed in those terms, the additional access provided would make it impossible to operate the US domestic program for sugar in the manner intended by Congress and would result in major disruptions in the US sugar market, including sharply reduced prices to growers, loss of jobs, and major budgetary outlays by the US government. According to the ASA, these costs would far outweigh any gains to the economy resulting from lower sugar prices, particularly when consumers are unlikely to receive any benefit in the form of reduced retail prices for sugar.

ASA concluded its presentation by urging the Administration not to increase market access for sugar within the framework of CAFTA or any other bilateral or regional trade pacts. Instead, ASA urged the Administration to focus on achieving dramatic reform of the world sugar market through comprehensive, sector-specific WTO negotiation to eliminate all significant trade-distorting government activities affecting the world sugar market.

In mid-April, John Gay, Dickie Ellender and Charles Thibaut joined in an industry-wide meeting to discuss CAFTA activities with the new consulting firm hired by the industry to combat CAFTA implementing legislation.

**Budget/Appropriations Process Begins**

Delays in putting together final budget blueprints have slowed the appropriations process, leading some to begin speculating about the advisability of planning for another omnibus document containing all, or nearly all, of the thirteen appropriations packages. Others, reluctant to deal with such an unwieldy document and process, are considering a bundling of two-three appropriations measures together for floor consideration (called "minibuses") to speed the process. Senate and House appropriators continue to hold hearings on the various measures, including agriculture, but the timeline for marking up specific packages is currently unavailable.

**Energy Efforts Stymied**

A stalemate between House and Senate leadership over inclusion of language to limit liability on MTBE continues to frustrate efforts to move the bill to a final vote. House leadership insists that MTBE provisions must be in the final agreement, while the Senate has consistently rejected such provisions. The oil industry in early April announced opposition to the Senate bill (without MTBE language), further exacerbating the standoff and reducing the chances that an energy bill will be approved this year.

**USDA Tightens 03/04 OAQ**

USDA announced an adjustment in the Overall Allotment Quantity (OAQ) for 2003/04 in early April, lowering the OAQ to the 8.25 million short

tons from the previously announced level of 8.5 million short tons. In the announcement, USDA also informed the industry that the 2004/05 OAQ would be announced in July of this year, one month earlier than USDA's recent pattern but much later than the industry had requested. The announcement also included a reminder that any forfeitures in the coming months would be deducted from next year's OAQ, a not-very-subtle warning to the industry to take steps now to reduce production to avoid a lower allotment next year.

**USDA WASDE April Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released**

The USDA released its April World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. Estimated U.S. sugar production for fiscal year 2002/03 was unchanged at 8,379,000 short tons (raw value), as was USDA's Louisiana production estimate of 1,368,000. 2002/03 total imports and imports under TRQ were unchanged at 1,730,000 short tons and 1,210,000 short tons, respectively. Total 02/03 supply remained at 11,528,000 and exports were unchanged at 142,000 short tons. Ending stocks fell slightly to 1,251,000 and 2002/03 ending stocks-to-use remained at 12.2 percent.

2003/04 production was increased to 8,994,000 from 8,945,000 short tons last month, with beet production rising to 4,862,000 short tons from 4,824,000 and cane production rising to 4,132,000 from 4,121,000 short tons last month. Louisiana cane sugar production was raised to 1,477,000 from 1,472,000 short tons. Imports were increased to 1,659,000 from 1,584,000 short tons due to an increase in re-export program imports , resulting in an increase in 2003/04 total supply to 11,904,000 short tons from 11,787,000 in March. Export sales were increased to 200,000 from 160,000 short tons and total uses increased to 9,915,000 from 9,835,000 short tons, resulting in ending stocks at 1,989,000 from 1,952,000 short tons in March. The stocks-to-use ratio was increased to 20.1 percent from 19.8 percent last month.


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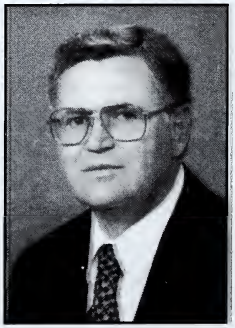

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# ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

## Crop Report - Soybean Production
## Contact Committee Meeting
## New Home for Audubon Sugar Institute

Stands of cane did not improve greatly during the first two weeks of April. Although the days were sunny and bright, night temperatures have remained below 65 degrees. Cane does not respond well to cool nights even though the days are relatively warm with temperatures reaching near 80 degrees. Stands remain weak in fields of Polado treated cane that was harvested early, in fields that were slow to drain during the wet winter months, and in fields that did not have the residue removed in a timely manner. Other fields, as was discussed in last month's article, are distressed and slow to improve from damage inflected during the wet harvest of 2002. At this time, most growers are holding on to cane that is somewhat weak, and appear to be in no rush to plow it out.

After a recent trip to the Bunkie area, the author is reminded of why he does not like to tour the more northern area of the cane belt in the early spring. The stands appear to be extremely slow in filling the row with cane. However, in discussions with growers from the area they were satisfied with their stands of cane for this time of year. One grower visited during the tour commented that the 2003 crop was his best crop and that from what he was seeing in his fields at this time indicates that his crop was off to a better start this year than the 2003 crop.

Throughout the cane belt, the Easter weekend was accompanied by a sharp change in the weather conditions. The daytime and nighttime temperatures dropped by 15°. Most of the belt was reporting night temperatures in the mid to upper forties and day temperatures in the mid sixties. Additionally, much of the area received two inches or more of rain. Prior to the rains, field conditions in many regions were becoming very dry; the majority of growers will only miss two or three days of fieldwork. The timeliness of these rains should enhance grass control by herbicides that was applied during the previous two weeks.

Before the rain, many growers were well advanced in their fieldwork. At the writing of this article, fertilization is estimated to be more than 50 percent complete. As usual, there are growers who have just started and then there are growers who have completed their fertilization and herbicide applications.

**Soybean Production**

The rains of the Easter weekend were especially timely for those cane growers who were preparing their fields for the planting of soybeans. With the high price of soybeans, many cane growers are hoping to supplement their incomes by producing a crop of beans. Over the years here in the more southern region of the cane belt, growers have not produced maximum yield of high quality beans. Too much moisture/rain during harvest is a major factor in not achieving high yields of quality beans. Additionally, most cane growers do not have bean-harvesting equipment and must either contract someone to harvest their beans or make arrangements for harvest of their crop by a neighbor who has bean-harvesting equipment. In most cases, a neighbor

does not harvest outside beans until his crop is fully harvested or the field conditions will not allow the harvest of his own beans. When one depends on a neighbor to harvest the crop, maximum yields and quality may be missed. If there is a delay in harvest, rains can shatter the mature bean pods and reduce yields significantly. Because of a rush to get the job done, most commercial harvest operations do not take time and put in efforts to ensure that maximum yields are harvested.

If bean production is on the agenda make sure that you are up to speed on insect problems associated with soybean production, especially the losses and damage that can be caused by a stinkbug infestation. Additional information on insect problems and control recommendations can be obtained from the county agent in your area. Because damage from insects in soybeans can blow out of hand so quickly, perhaps the best suggestion is to make sure that a certified crop consultant is employed to keep up with any insect problems that may develop during the growing season.

Growers are also reminded that sugarcane is a long-term crop and the most profitable crop of the two. There are a number of observations (not backed with research data) that indicate cane that is planted following soybean production does not yield as good (plant cane crop) as cane that is planted in fields which were fallowed for the summer. The problem is most often observed in fields where the beans are plowed down and not harvested. In most cases, the fields were planted with cane rather quickly (less than two weeks) after the beans were turned under. Even after harvest, about 30% of the total biomass of the bean crop remains in the field. In an effort to allow the residue in bean producing fields a short period in which to start decomposition, fields on which no beans were produced should be planted first.

In a discussion with Dr. Howard Viator, LSU AgCenter, Iberia Station, New Iberia, Louisiana he relayed the following; that in his research while at the station there have been a number of side-by-side observations of fields where cane was planted behind beans and where soybeans were not included in the rotation. These are strictly observations, in which most of the fields of cane planted to non-bean acreage appeared to be somewhat better during the plant cane year. There was at least one test in which a side-by-side comparison was harvested. This test compared the yields of cane planted following plowed down beans and plots on which no beans were grown. The yields (plant cane year only) of the cane planted following the plowed down beans were significantly reduced when compared to plantings in non-bean land.

**Contact Committee Meeting**

The date for the American Sugar Cane League Contact Committee Meeting has been set for the morning of June 30, 2004. More information on the Contact Committee Meeting will appear in the June issue of the Sugar Bulletin. Contact Committee Chairman "Boo" Levert is requesting contributions for the program from the members of the industry. The theme of the upcoming meeting will be *efforts needed to remain profitable with stagnant prices, while under production restrictions*. Chairman Levert requests that any suggestions for other discussion topics or presentation be passed on to League staff.

**New Home for Audubon Sugar Institute**

On April 1, 2004, the Audubon Sugar Institute held its annual "Factory Operation Seminar." Not only were those processors who attended the meeting treated to a very informative program, they had an opportunity to visit ASI's new facilities at St. Gabriel. Syngenta donated the laboratory facilities to the LSU AgCenter. In the old facilities on campus, ASI's researchers were cramped for space; additionally the space that once housed the old mill and a portion of the lab space is being turned into a power plant for the University. In the new facilities at St Gabriel, ASI staff should now have plenty of room to conduct their research into improving sugarcane processing. These outstanding new facilities should fulfill ASI laboratory requirements for a good number of years. The new laboratory facilities and additional space can only enhance the outstanding research being conducted by the researchers at the Audubon Sugar Institute.

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# THE BATON ROUGE LINE

By Tom Spradley
Spradley and Spradley

## Economic Development Focus - Bad Signals - Roemer In or Out

Governor Blanco delivered on step one of her campaign promises of economic development. Step one was to pass legislation to phase out two taxes which are believed to be a serious hindrance to companies looking in our direction for investment. Sales taxes on machinery and equipment and corporate franchise taxes on borrowed capital seem punitive to most people who are in the economic development business and, in a special session of the legislature, the Governor convinced enough of the legislators to go along with her. In the end everyone agreed on the structure of the phase out and shortly these taxes will fade into the tax graveyard like the inventory tax and the inheritance tax.

Now comes the regular session and Blanco seems to focus on another important aspect of our problem with economic development - image. Images are all too easy to develop and very difficult to change. Our image as a corrupt political state was probably earned. We have sent too many elected officials to jail for various reasons over too many eras. It is very difficult to convince investors that we are now honest "just because we say so."

The Governor wants tighter ethics laws with fewer loopholes. Actually she wants no loop holes at all, but the legislative process usually produces some which are deemed to be necessary for good reasons but can lead to abuse. Her ethics proposals are "on point" and seem logical to everyone except a few. Her proposals likely will pass.

**Bad Signals**

At the same time as solons do all this good work to fix our problems and make us attractive there are counter productive things happening. Industrial development consultants, a breed of consultants who assist industries who are looking to expand into new markets, consider Louisiana's homestead exemption an ugly factor to overcome.

In these parts we consider not paying taxes on our home to be a birthright. But fewer than 20 states have homestead exemptions and the second highest exemption in the nation is only half as large as ours. Most states offer only limited homestead exemptions, like for veterans or elderly people.

As a result of homes not paying much property tax, business and industry pay over 90% of the total. This does two things; first it makes it easy to pass NEW property tax millages since the citizens who vote for the tax don't expect to pay the tax, and secondly it scares the begezzers out of prospective industrial development consultants and their clients.

Now we have legislative proposals to raise the homestead exemption. They are not likely to pass. But the mere raising of the flag is a bad signal. It might be percieved that such proposals indicate that we really, after all, have not changed that much.

Governor Blanco is put on the defensive when explaining our tax policy. When trying to sell our state to outsiders she must sometimes wonder "how many pork chops do I need to tie around

this ugly baby's neck to get the dog to play with it?"

**Roemer In or Out**

Following a statewide poll that has him running second to Congressman David Vitter for the Senate seat being vacated by Sen John Breaux, former Governor Buddy Roemer is complicating the Republican side of the Senate race ledger. The poll showed Vitter at 28%, Roemer at 19% and Democrats John Kennedy and Chris John at 17% with State Representative Arthur Morrell trailing at 6%.

Roemer promises he will decide by late summer. Close associates of the former Governor say he is bedeviled by the fact that he has never actually won a state wide election. On the other hand they say he is very successful in business and not too easily drawn away from that world.


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# (2002 CROP)

**Boudreaux Enterprise**
**RJB, LLC**

**Top 20 Producer**
**11th Place**

Richard and James Boudreaux, and Rick Louque,
Assumption County Agent

Eugene Woods and Rick Louque, Assumption County Agent

**Woods Farm, Inc.**

**Top 20 Producer**
**12th Place**

**2nd Place District**
**Acreage Winner -**
**River/Bayou**
**Lafourche District**
**Category IV**

**J & R Robert, Inc.**

**Top 20 Producer**
**13th Place**

**Parish Winner -**
**Ascension**

Jimmy Garrett, Ascension County Agent;
John, Matthew, and Chris Robert

## LeJeune Brothers

**Top 20 Producer**
**14th Place**

**1st Place District**
**Acreage Winner**
**Teche District**
**Category II**

**Parish Winner -**
**Iberia**

Jimmy Flannigan, Iberia County Agent, Bryan LeJeune,
Dovan Broussard, and Ricky LeJeune

Mike Hebert, Lafourche County Agent;
Chris, Lester, Bobby, Jude and Ross Gravois

## Bobby & Lester Gravois

**Top 20 Producer**
**15th Place**

**Parish Winner -**
**Lafourche**

## A & B Farms

**Top 20 Producer**
**16th Place (tie)**

**2nd Place District**
**Acreage Winner -**
**River/Bayou**
**Lafourche District**
**Category II**

Kevin, Trent, Andrew, Brian and Travis Medine;
Harry Laws, Iberville County Agent

## Gravois Farms

**Top 20 Producer**
**16th Place (tie)**

Jimmy Garrett, St. James County Agent;
Ozane, Alan, and Vincent Gravois

Miles Brashier, Pointe Coupee County Agent;
Ricky Rivet; and Harry Laws, West Baton Rouge County Agent

## Ricky J. Rivet Farms

**Top 20 Producer**
**17th Place (tie)**

**2nd Place District**
**Acreage Winner**
**Northern District**
**Category I**

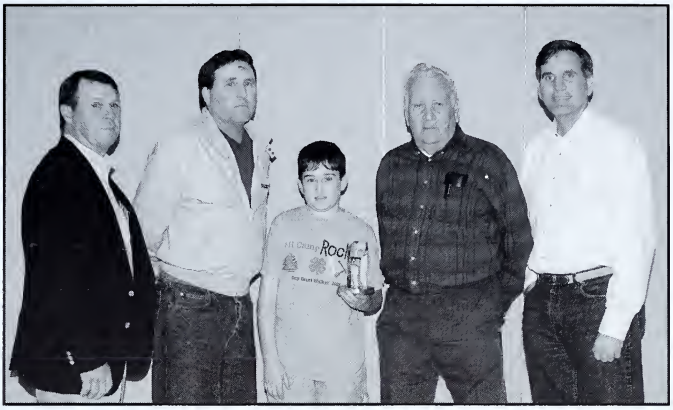
## Roussel Farms, Inc.

**Top 20 Producer**
**17th Place (tie)**

Jimmy Garret, St. James County Agent; Ricky and Charles Roussel

**Blackberry Farms, Inc.**

**Top 20 Producer**
**18th Place**



Jimmy Garret, St. James County Agent;
Greg, Phillip, Charles, and Kenneth Gravois

Jimmy Flannigan, St. Mary County Agent;
Harvey, Sr.; Harvey, Jr.; Lane and Brent Blanchard

**Blanchard Bros., Inc.**

**1st Place District**
**Acreage Winner**
**Teche District**
**Category III**

**Parish Winner -**
**St. Mary**

**Northside Planting Co., LLC**

**1st Place District**
**Acreage Winner**
**Teche District**
**Category IV**

Jimmy Flanigan, St. Mary County Agent;
Clint, Chad and Jackie Judice

Nicky Melancon and Alfred Guidry; St. Martin County Agent

**Melancon Sugar Cane Farms**

**2nd Place District Acreage Winner Teche District Category IV**

**Parish Winner - St. Martin**

**Keith Zeringue**

**2nd PlaceDistrict Acreage Winner River/Bayou Lafourche District Category I**

Mike Hebert, Lafourche County Agent and Keith Zeringue

Miles Brashier, Pointe Coupee County Agent; Kenny Self and Harry Laws, West Baton Rouge County Agent

**Kenny Self**

**1st Place District Acreage Winner Northern District Category II**

**Dean Gravois Farms**

**Parish Winner - St. Charles**

Dean Gravois and Rene Schmidt, St. Charles County Agent

**Rebecca Plantation**

**Parish Winner - Terrebonne**

Ray Riche and Rick Louque, Terrebonne County Agent

• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •

## NO PHOTOS AVAILABLE FOR:

**Patch Farms, LLC**
**2nd Place District Acreage Winner Teche District Category II**

**Fabian LeMaire, Jr., Inc.**
**2nd Place District Acreage Winner Teche District Category III**

**R & E Poche**
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**Volume 82, No. 9** **June 2004**

# THE SUGAR BULLETIN

**Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A.**

**Announcing the**

## ANNUAL CONTACT COMMITTEE MEETING

**of the**

## AMERICAN SUGAR CANE LEAGUE Of The U.S.A., Inc.

***Wednesday, June 30,2004***

***9:00 a.m.***

***Howard Johnson Envie Banquet Facility***
***203 East Bayou Rd.***
***Thibodaux, Louisiana***

*(See page 12 for details)*

The mission of the American Sugar Cane League is to sustain success through effective research, positive legislation, public relations/ promotion, and education.

# The Sugar Bulletin

The Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A., Inc.



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*The views and opinions expressed by columnists in this publication are those of the author and not necessarily those of the American Sugar Cane League. Views and opinions expressed in advertisements in this publication are those of the advertiser and not necessarily those of the American Sugar Cane League.*

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EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

# UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

by Jerry McKee

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## Jackie Theriot "Sugar Man of the Year"
## Charles Thibaut
## Macon Edwards

Chip Dyer, right, presents Jackie Theriot with the Dyer Memorial Award "Sugar Man of the Year-2003" in Manhattan, New York on May 13, 2004

Jackie Theriot, General Manager of Louisiana Sugarcane Cooperative, Inc. and presently the League's Chairman of the National Legislative Committee, was recognized on May 13, 2004 as "Sugar Man of the Year – 2003" when he received the sugar industry's most coveted prize, the Dyer Memorial Award. Industry leaders from across the nation convened for the presentation of the 46th consecutive annual award at a brunch held at Bayard's in downtown Manhattan, New York. Mr. Theriot joins the ranks of distinguished winners who constitute the elite of the American sugar industry over the past half-century.

A native of Catahoula, Louisiana, Jackie Theriot was born and raised on a sugarcane farm in the Cajun sugar-growing region of the state. Following studies in agronomy at the University of Southwestern Louisiana, he served for several years with the Peace Corps in West Africa. He later did contract work with the International Programs department at Texas A&M, followed by a period as agricultural liaison with the American Embassy in Tunisia.

In 1968 Mr. Theriot returned to sugarcane farming in Catahoula, combining it with graduate work in International Affairs at Syracuse University. In 1983 he became general manager of the Breaux Bridge Sugar Cooperative, which in 1993 merged with the St. Martinville sugar mill to form the Louisiana Sugarcane Cooperative. He has been active in the American Sugar Cane League as a board member and is the immediate past Chairman of the Board of Directors, lobbying on behalf of the industry and advising the Louisiana Congressional delegation on agricultural matters.

Fluent in French and Spanish, Jackie Theriot has served extensively overseas as a consultant, working in some 50 countries over a 20-year period. Currently he is as a member of the sugar industry task force seeking a compromise NAFTA sweetener agreement with our Mexican counterparts. He has frequently led delegations of Louisiana cane farmers to visit the sugar industries of neighboring countries.

Ed Makin, Senior Vice President and Director of C. Czarnikow Sugar, Inc., New York, read the citation on behalf of the panel of judges, and presented Mr. Theriot with an engraved silver bowl, emblematic of the Award. Other members of the judges' panel were David Roche, President and CEO of Minn-Dak Farmers' Cooperative, and Ken Lorenze, Senior Manager, Domestic Sugar & Cocoa, Kraft Foods North America.

In accepting the Award, Jackie Theriot referred to his Cajun background, and to the whole family of cane growers and sugar producers in his home state, with whom he shared the honor. He spoke of the difficulty the Mexican Task Force is experiencing in trying to repair the damage done by NAFTA, and warned against further liberalization of sugar trade at the bilateral or regional level. He stressed that it is essential to reserve sugar trade issues for negotiation at the WTO level, where all countries are represented. The present piecemeal approach inhibits the sound investment decisions needed to ensure the future of the industry.

**Charles Thibaut**

After thirteen years of outstanding service to the Louisiana Sugar Cane Industry, Charles Thibaut has resigned as Chairman of the American Sugar Cane League's National Legislative Committee. This chairmanship is arguably the most difficult and demanding of all voluntary positions in the League's make-up. Charles not only met those demands, he also established an exceptionally high benchmark for leadership in legislative issues during his tenure. He exhibited a great understanding of the political processes at work and earned the respect of political leaders and sugar industry personnel from all over the world. His knowledge and his committment to our industry's well being made him a forceful and eloquent defender of Louisiana Sugar. Thank you Charles for a job well done!

**Macon Edwards**

The contractual relationship between the American Sugar Cane League and the Macon Edwards Company has come to an end. Macon Edwards has served the interests of Louisiana Sugar in Washington, D.C honorably and capably for many years. His knowledge of the industry combined with his considerable political skills made him an outstanding advocate for our cause in the Nation's Capital. We are extremely grateful for his substantial contributions and service to the Louisiana Sugar Cane Industry. We will miss his wit and wisdom.

We will also miss his assistant Mara Peltz. Mara was always willing to assist the industry. Together, they make a wonderful team. We all wish the very best for Macon and Mara in the future.

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# WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

## Legislative Activity
## CAFTA Signing in May
## Brazilian Ethanol US-Bound?
## USDA WASDE May Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

In mid-May, appropriators were provided a draft blueprint for FY2005 spending levels (302B allocations) for the various federal programs financed through annual appropriations. While the details have not been released as of this writing, the early signs are bleak for agricultural spending programs. The annual appropriations cover discretionary spending programs, such as the Houma research programs and most government services. Tighter discretionary spending mandates would not directly affect farm program spending unless amendments were included (i.e. payment limits or sugar marketing assessments) to offset higher spending in discretionary spending programs.

The allocations were provided without a budget agreement and could be adjusted if and when an agreement is reached in both Houses of Congress, but agricultural allocations have not traditionally been raised and have been subject to rescissions later in the process (the House bill was subject to a rescission last year).

The issue of combining appropriations bills (there are thirteen appropriations packages prepared by thirteen subcommittees in the House and Senate appropriations committees) into omnibus or "minibus" packages, as I discussed in the May issue of the Bulletin, remains unclear at the time of this writing, but indications are likely to emerge over the coming weeks as appropriations subcommittees begin to write their respective bills based on the new allocations.

**CAFTA Signing in Mid-May**

The Administration announced that President Bush would sign the CAFTA in mid-May, but noted that the Dominican Republic FTA would be rolled into that agreement at a later date, so the legislative clock does not start until the DR agreement is signed. With the campaign cycle swiftly moving into high-gear, it seems clear that the CAFTA vote will not occur prior to the November elections. This, along with the uncertainty surrounding the appropriations process, raises the very real possibility that congressional leaders could call the Members back for a lame-duck session after the elections. We will continue to monitor this situation, along with the consulting firm managing our CAFTA efforts, and will keep you apprised of any changes.

**Brazilian Ethanol US-Bound?**

Press reports in early May indicate that at least one major US grain/sweetener company is looking south as a way to build their ethanol presence in the US. Cargill is purportedly considering construction of a dehyrdration plant in El Salvador to process Brazilian cane ethanol before shipping it into the U.S. market as fuel-grade ethanol. Under the Caribbean Basin Initiative, this scheme would allow the ethanol to move into the US in avoidance of the tariffs that would typically apply to Brazilian ethanol. The National Corn Growers Association expressed displeasure to this news, pointing out that the Brazilian ethanol would be competing

with US ethanol plants, including the farmer-owned facilities that make up approximately 50 percent of US capacity.

In other ethanol news, the tax provisions of the energy bill were attached to a foreign sales tax bill approved by the Senate in early May, while supporters seek other vehicles to move the remainder of the energy provisions, including ethanol.

**USDA WASDE May Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released**

The USDA released its May World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. 2003/04 beginning stocks were raised to 1,661,000 from 1,251,000 and production was decreased to 8,963,000 from 8,994,000 short tons last month, with an increase in beet production to 4,875,000, from 4,862,000 short tons, more than offset by a reduction in cane production to 4,088,000 from 4,132,000 short tons last month. Louisiana cane sugar production was lowered to 1,458,000 from 1,477,000 short tons. Imports were unchanged at 1,659,000, resulting in an increase in 2003/04 total supply to 12,283,000 from 11,904,000 short tons in April. Export sales were unchanged at 200,000 and the new "deliveries" line (replacing "sales" from previous WASDE reports) was set at 9,860,000 short tons, raising total uses to 10,060,000 from 9,915,000 short tons. This resulted in ending stocks of 2,223,000 from 1,989,000 short tons in April. The stocks-to-use ratio was increased to 22.1 percent from 20.1 percent last month.

The first 04/05 projections put total production at 8,590,000 short tons, with beet production at 4,520,000 and cane production at 4,070,000 short tons. Louisiana production was projected at 1,575,000 short tons. Imports were projected at 1,591,000, reflecting TRQ imports of 1,206,000, raising total supply to 12,404,000 short tons. Exports were projected at 150,000, deliveries at 9,905,000, and re-exports at 190,000. Total use was projected at 10,055,000 short tons, leaving ending stocks of 2,349,000 short tons and a stocks-to-use ratio of 23.4 percent for May.

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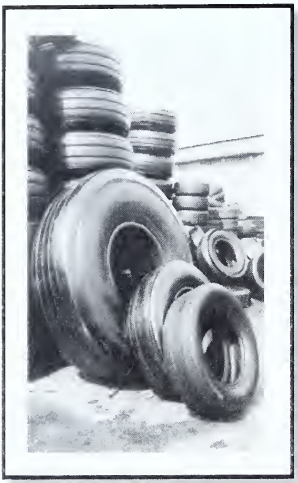

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# ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

## Dr. James "Jim" Irvine
## Crop Report - Two New Varieties Released
## Sugarcane Meetings and Field Days for 2004
## American Society of Sugar Cane Technologists
## Contact Committee Meeting

It is with great regret that I must report the death of Dr. James "Jim" Irvine. Dr. Irvine was a long time friend of this author as well as a friend and mentor to many other researchers who are now employed by the various research institutions that work for the Louisiana sugar industry.

On May 3, 2004 after confronting his cancer for more than two years, James Estill Irvine, 76, peacefully succumbed to the malady at his Golden Palms residence, Harlingen, Texas. Dr. Irvine was born February 2, 1928 in Charlottesville, Virginia. He received his B.S. (1951) and M.S. (1952) degrees from the University of Miami, at Coral Gables, Florida and his Ph.D. from the University of Virginia at Charlottesville, Virginia in 1957, all in Biology. He began his career with ARS as a Plant Physiologist at the USDA-ARS Territorial Experiment Station Division at Mayaguez, Puerto Rico in 1955. He transferred to the USDA-ARS Sugarcane Field Laboratory at Houma, Louisiana in 1961 becoming the Laboratory's Director in 1973. He served as Laboratory Director until his retirement in August 1984. While at Houma, he supervised a breeding program that released 12 varieties for use by Louisiana growers. His area of expertise ranged from screening for cold tolerance, to quantification of photosynthesis and productivity, to general physiological processes in the sugarcane plant, to investigations on cell and tissue culture and its use in developing transgenic plants.

Upon his retirement from his USDA service, Dr. Irvine did not fade into the woodwork as he immediately began a career as a full-time consultant with the Centro de Tecnología COPERSUCAR in Piracicaba, Sao Paulo, Brazil. He stayed with COPERSUCAR from 1984 to 1988, when he was contacted about a position available at the Texas A&M University Agricultural Research and Extension Center at Weslaco. While in Texas, he was involved in the release of an additional 4 varieties. In 1999 the Inter-American Sugar Cane Seminar recognized him for his outstanding contributions to the world of sugar.

Dr. Irvine is survived by his wife, Martha, three children, Virginia (Jenny), Diane, and Frank, and several grandchildren. Additionally, many throughout the sugar world will deeply miss Dr. Irvine's guidance and inspiration.

**Crop Report**

For mid-May, the older stubble fields appear to be somewhat behind in height and population. Many fields of older stubble (third and fourth)

are still suffering from the effects of the 2002 harvest. Growers are plagued with problems of Johnson grass and bluegrass (bermuda) infestations in these less than adequate stands. This year, the industry as a whole has a more severe Johnson grass infestation than this author has seen in the past ten years. Many growers were not able to maximize their herbicide applications due to the winds (15 to 25 mph) that have blown nearly continually from the end of March through mid-May. Additionally, fieldwork has been hampered by several tropical-like-lows that have dumped record amounts of rain in many portions of the cane belt. Fieldwork has suffered from the wet spring. Many in the industry associate a wet spring (March, April and May) with a decrease in the population (tillering) and the opposite with a dry spring.

The most recent growth measurements at the USDA Farm near Chacahoula, LA indicates a different picture for the plant-cane and first-stubble crops. These measurements indicate that of the last nine crops only the plant-cane measurements for 1999, 2000, and 2002 were taller than this year's. Also the measurements taken at the farm, for approximately the same time period, indicate that only 1999 and 2000 first-stubble crops were taller than the measurement in 2004.

At this time many are predicting that this year's production will be considerably less than previous years' production. There are several reasons for the forecast of a decrease in production for the 2004 crop. They include the weakness in, and high amount of acreage that is older stubble (third and fourth). A slight decrease in total acres in production, due to plowed out fields that were weak in the early spring, account for a portion of the reduction, as does the somewhat larger than normal planting this fall. There are two main reasons for the larger planting, one is due to two years of wet field conditions during planting, and for some growers it is a must that they get a good planting this year. Furthermore, many growers are becoming convinced that keeping such a high percentage of old stubble, especially in fields of clay soils, does not return the most profits.

**New Variety Release**

On May 5, 2004 Chairman Chris Mattingly called the meeting of the Variety Release Committee to order. The committee was made up of breeders and other research personnel from LSU, USDA, and ASCL. The committee voted to release two new varieties; Ho 95-988 and L 97-128 to the cane growers of Louisiana for commercial production. In replicated yield tests, the yields of sugar per acre for both Ho 95-988 and L 97-128 have been either more than or equal to LCP 85-384 in plant cane and stubble crops. More information on the varieties' yield potential and other characteristics can be found in this issue of the Bulletin in the articles entitled "A Report on the 2003 Outfield Variety Tests," "Notice of Release of Sugarcane Variety Ho 95-988," and "Notice of Release of Sugarcane Variety L 97-128."

In 2000, the variety Ho 95-988 was dropped from the variety and seed increase program because of smut, but data collection was continued for breeding purposes. The variety is several years behind schedule, but because of favorable data it was sent to the secondary stations last fall (2003). All of the seed that is on the secondary stations will be replanted this fall, so there should be plenty of seed of Ho 95-988 for distribution in the fall of 2005. There is a limited amount of the new variety Ho 95-988 for sale from at least one of the commercial seed companies.

The variety L 97-128, on the other hand, has been through a normal increase cycle on the American Sugar Cane League secondary stations and will be available for distribution this fall. A complete list of stations where L 97-128 is available, an application form for seed of the new variety, and cost of the seed will be published in the July issue of The Sugar Bulletin.

**Sugarcane Meetings and Field Days for 2004**

The following dates and times for up-coming sugarcane meetings are provided by Benjamin L. Legendre, PhD., Sugarcane Specialist and Professor LSU AgCenter. Dr. Legendre indicates that the times shown are the times at which the meetings are scheduled to begin and that registration starts about one hour before.

**May 28 – 9:30 AM** **St. James/Ascension Parish Sugarcane Field Day**
Welcome Plantation
Welcome, LA

**June 2 – 9:00 AM** **Terrebonne Parish Sugarcane Field Day**
Ardoyne Farm
USDA-ARS, SRRC
Sugarcane Research Unit
Chacahoula, LA

**June 16 – 18** **ASSCT 34th Annual Joint Meeting of the Florida and Louisiana Divisions**
Tradewinds
St. Pete Beach, FL

**June 30 – 9:00 AM** **ASCL Contact Committee Meeting**
Howard Johnson Inn
Thibodaux, LA

**July 14 – 9:30 AM Avoyelles/Rapides Parish Fall Practices Meeting**
Bunkie Civic Center
(Old Bunkie Bank Meeting Room)
Bunkie, LA

**July 15 – 8:30 AM** **Lafourche Parish Sugarcane Field Day**
American Legion Home
Raceland, LA

**July 20 – 3:00 PM** **Vermilion Parish**
Sugarcane Summer School
Cecil McCrory Exhibit Bldg.
Abbeville, LA

**July 21 - 9:00 AM** **LSU Area Sugarcane Field Day**
**(Iberville, Pointe Coupee (Host) St. Charles, St. John, West Baton Rouge)**
Sugar Research Station,
St. Gabriel, LA

**July 27 – 9:00 AM** **Assumption Parish Sugarcane Tour and Field Day**
New Extension Office
Napoleonville, LA

**July 28 – 4:30 PM** **St. Mary Parish Sugarcane Field Day**
KC Hall
Centerville, LA

**July 29 – 4:30 PM** **Iberia Parish Sugarcane Field Day**
M.A. Patout & Sons
Patoutville, LA

**July 30 - 2:00 PM** **St. Martin/Lafayette/ St. Landry Parishes Sugarcane Field Day**
Levert-St. John
St. Martinville, LA

**August 3 – 9:30 AM** **Certified Prescribed Burn Manager Training Meeting**
Sugar Station Conference Room
(Front Building)
St. Gabriel, LA

Growers are reminded that they should make every attempt to attend a field day. There are always some new bits of information and thoughts presented at the field days. Furthermore, if you have an opportunity to visit the sugar research stations please do so. Researchers there work on projects that help you, as a cane grower, improve yields and decrease costs. They, the researchers, are always appreciative of an opportunity to show off their work. A tour of one of the sugar stations will give a grower or mill person a better understanding of the large amount of support research that goes into the breeding program and the many other disciplines of research that are needed to optimize production with a minimum amount of inputs.

**American Society of Sugar Cane Technologists**

Members of ASSCT are reminded that the 34th Annual Joint Meeting of the Florida and Louisiana Divisions of the ASSCT will be held June 16 – 18, 2004 at the Tradewinds Island Grand Resort, 5500 Gulf Boulevard, St. Pete Beach, Florida. During the two days of presentations, there are a number of pertinent papers being offered in both the Agricultural

Sections and the Manufacturing Sections. By contacting Dr. Denver Loupe at the LSU AgCenter further information can be obtained about the meetings. The phone number at which Dr. Loupe can be contacted is (225) 578-6930. Additional information about the meeting can also be obtained from the ASSCT web site at www.assct.org

**Contact Committee Meeting**

As mentioned in last month's issue of **The Sugar Bulletin** the date for the Contact Committee Meeting has been set for June 30, 2004. The meeting will be held at the Howard Johnson in Thibodaux, LA. Chairman Lawrence "Boo" Levert will call the meeting to order at 9:00 AM and the meeting should last until about noon. The first section of the program will center on the variety program. Information regarding the yield potential and other characteristics of the two newly released varieties Ho 95-988 and L 97-128 will be discussed as well as the quantity of seed cane that will be available from the secondary stations.

Each year more and more of the industry is forced to employ migrant workers during the planting season. .There are many rules and regulations that must be followed for the protection of both the employer and the migrant workers. In an effort to prevent any future problems with the employment of migrant workers the U.S. Department of Labor presents informational programs for employers of migrant workers. At the upcoming Contact Committee Meeting Karen Clampitt, with the U.S. Department of Labor Wage & Hour Division, will present a brief discussion of the federal labor standards and a general application concerning minimum wage, overtime, and youth employment. Additionally, she will touch on the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act and its provisions that will affect migrant workers and their dealings with farm labor contractors, agricultural employers, agricultural associations, and providers of migrant housing.

There have been many discussions among growers, processors, and researchers about methods of encouraging the delivery of higher quality cane to the mill. All agree that there must be some way to encourage the higher quality deliveries. As of yet there have been no solutions devised that are satisfactory to all. Both growers and millers agree that if the industry were growing a more erect variety there would certainly be less trash delivered to the mill. Once the industry starts to increase the newly released varieties, there should be some decrease in the amount of trash delivered to the mill. Ho 95-988, HoCP 96-540, and L 97-128 do lodge, but not nearly as badly as LCP 85-384. This brings us to the next topic to be discussed at the Contact Committee Meeting, which is the improvement to combine harvesters and their effect on cane quality.

Because of the low yields for the 2002 and 2003 crops, production controls were not implemented. Now in 2004, with production controls looming over their heads, many growers are questioning what actions they should take. Should money and effort be spent in planting marginal fields? Hopefully by the time of the Contact Committee Meeting there will be more guidelines, and there can be a good discussion on what decisions should be made. Mr. Willie Cooper with Farm Services has agreed to participate in the program and will lead the informational discussion.

At the conclusion of the Contact Committee Meeting, all attendees are invited to attend the American Sugar Cane League Board Meeting that will commence at 1:30 pm.

A meal **will** be provided at the conclusion of the Contact Committee Meeting. Please return the enclosed RSVP card. All attendees are invited to attend the American Sugar Cane League Board Meeting that will commence at 1:30 pm.

**Mark your calendar**
**Annual Contact Committee Meeting**
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# *Notice of Release of Sugarcane Variety Ho 95-988*

**United States Department of Agriculture**
**Agricultural Research Service**
**Washington D.C. 20250**

**And**

**Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station**
**Louisiana State University, Agricultural Center**
**Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70803**

**And**

**American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A., Inc.**
**Thibodaux, Louisiana 70301**

The Agricultural Research Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station of the LSU Agricultural Center, and the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A., Inc., working cooperatively to develop improved sugarcane varieties, have jointly developed and hereby announce the release of a new variety, Ho 95-988, for commercial planting in 2004.

Ho 95-988 is a product of the cross CP 86-941 x US 89-12 bred in 1990 and selected as part of the ARS's Sugarcane Research Unit's basic breeding program at Houma (Ho), Louisiana. All four of its grandparents are wild- or foreign-commercial derivative varieties, two involving *Saccharum spontaneum,* one involving *S. robustum,* and one being a $BC_2$ progeny of Hawaiian variety, H 49-3646. This variety is not closely related to any variety currently grown in Louisiana. It has a high population of medium-sized stalks that turn purple when exposed to sunlight. Its stalk number is 90% and weight is 120% of Louisiana's principal variety, LCP 85-384, averaged over plant, first-stubble and second-stubble crops. Ho 95-988 is an excellent stubbling variety.

Yield data from a total of 61 mechanically harvested, replicated yield trials on both light- and heavy-textured soils indicate that Ho 95-988 produces about 7% more cane yield and total recoverable sugar per acre than LCP 85-384 averaged across plant-cane, first-stubble, second-stubble, and third-stubble crops. Ho 95-988 produces levels of recoverable sugar per ton of cane and fiber content comparable to those of LCP 85-384. Field observations suggest that Ho 95-988 has greater stalk erectness and lower leaf sheath adherence to the stalk at harvest than LCP 85-384; hence, yield losses associated with the mechanical harvesting of Ho 95-988 are not expected to be as great.

Ho 95-988 is resistant to sugarcane mosaic virus (strains A, B, and D) and sorghum mosaic virus (strains H, I, and M). The variety is resistant to rust (*Puccinia melanocephala* H. & P. Syd.) and leaf scald [*Xanthomonas albilineans* (Ashby) Dowson] diseases under natural field infection conditions. It is moderately susceptible to smut (*Ustilago scitaminea* H. & P. Syd.);

however, significant yield losses from this disease are not expected. Similar to essentially all sugarcane cultivars released in Louisiana, Ho 95-988 can sustain significant reductions in yields of total recoverable sugar and cane in ratoon crops from ratoon stunting disease (RSD) (*Clavibacter xyli* subsp. *xyli* Davis et al.). To assure minimal risk from smut and RSD, it is strongly advised that seed cane of this variety be free or nearly free of these diseases at planting. Ho 95-988 does not appear to be any more susceptible to the sugarcane yellow leaf virus than current commercially grown varieties. Ho 95-988 is susceptible to the sugarcane borer [*Diatraea saccharalis* (Fabricius)] and should not be grown in areas were insecticides cannot be applied.

A limited supply of seed cane of Ho 95-988 may be available from commercial seed sources in 2004. Seed cane of Ho 95-988 will not be available for distribution by the American Sugar Cane League until after July 1, 2005. At that time seed cane will be distributed in accordance with procedures that will be announced to all sugarcane growers in Louisiana. Inquiries concerning seed cane for 2005 distribution should be directed to the American Sugarcane League, 206 East Bayou Road, Thibodaux, LA 70301. Neither the United States Department of Agriculture nor the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station has seed cane available for distribution.

*Dr. Edward B. Knipling*
Acting Administrator, USDA, Agricultural Research Service

*Dr. David Boethel*
Director, LSU AgCenter, Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station

*Mr. John Gay*
President, American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A, Inc.

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# *Notice of Release of Sugarcane Variety L 97-128*

**Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station**
**Louisiana State University, Agricultural Center**
**Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70803**

**And**

**United States Department of Agriculture**
**Agricultural Research Service**
**Washington, D.C. 20250**

**And**

**American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A, Inc.**
**Thibodaux, Louisiana 70301**

The Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station of the LSU Agricultural Center, the Agricultural Research Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, and the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A., Inc., working cooperatively to develop improved sugarcane varieties, have jointly developed and hereby announce the release of a new variety, L 97-128, for commercial planting in the summer of 2004.

L 97-128 was derived from a cross (XL92-42) made in 1992 between LCP 81-10 as the female parent and LCP 85-384 as the male parent. Single stool seedling selection was done at the St. Gabriel Research Station located at St. Gabriel, Louisiana in 1994. The stalks of L 97-128 are greenish-brown (green predominates) and are covered with a heavy wax layer. In the sunlight the stalks have a more purplish hue. The new variety has an average population of large diameter stalks. Its stalk population is 86% and stalk weight is 124% of Louisiana's leading variety, LCP 85-384, averaged over plant-cane, first-stubble, and second-stubble crops. L 97-128 is a good stubbling variety.

Yield data from 51 mechanically harvested outfield tests that are replicated on both light and heavy textured soils indicate that L 97-128 produces approximately 9% greater recoverable sugar per acre than LCP 85-384 averaged across plant-cane, first-stubble, and second-stubble crops. L 97-128 is very early maturing and has produced 4% greater recoverable sugar per ton of cane than LCP 85-384 when averaged across all tests. Based on 20 tests, the fiber content of the new variety is 12.2%, which is only slightly higher than LCP 85-384. Field observations indicate that L 97-128 is an erect variety and well suited to both whole stalk and combine harvesting systems. The leaf sheaths of L 97-128 are less tightly held than LCP 85-384, which should aid in trash extraction during combine harvesting of green (unburned) cane.

L 97-128 is resistant to sugarcane mosaic virus and sorghum mosaic virus. The new variety is moderately susceptible to smut (*Ustilago scitaminea* Sydow), moderately resistant to rust (*Puccinia melanocephala* H. And P. Syd.) and moderately resistant to leaf scald [*Xanthomonas albilineans* (Ashby) Dowson] under natural field infection. The effect of yellow leaf syndrome on the yield of L 97-128 is unknown. Similar to all other varieties grown in Louisiana, L 97-128 may sustain significant yield loss in stubble crops from ratoon stunting disease (*Clavibacter xyli* subsp. *Xyli*). To realize the maximum yield potential of this variety, healthy seed cane free of this disease must be planted. L 97-128 is susceptible to the sugarcane borer [*Diatraea saccharalis* (Fabricius)] and should be scouted to insure timely insecticide applications and should not be planted where insecticides cannot be applied. Field observations indicate that L 97-128 is not any more susceptible to herbicides

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**UNE 30. 2004**
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commonly used for weed control than LCP 85-384.

Based on two years of maturity data obtained from the USDA-ARS Sugarcane Research Unit, L 97-128 is very early maturing and continues to accumulate sucrose throughout the harvest. The new variety had 14% higher recoverable sugar per ton of cane when harvested in mid-September than LCP 85-384. When harvested in mid-December, L 97-128 had 4.2% higher recoverable sugar per ton of cane than LCP 85-384.

Seed cane of L 97-128 will be distributed by the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A., Inc. in accordance with the procedures to be announced to all sugarcane growers in Louisiana on or after July 1, 2004. Inquiries concerning seed cane should be directed to the American Sugar Cane League, 206 East Bayou Road, Thibodaux, LA 70301. Neither the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center nor the United States Department of Agriculture has seed cane available for distribution. An application for variety protection via a plant patent is being made by the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center.

*Dr. David Boethel*
Director, LSU AgCenter, Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station

*Dr. Edward B. Knipling*
Acting Administrator, USDA, Agricultural Research Service

*Mr. John Gay*
President, American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A, Inc.

Summary of results comparing the yield of L 97-128 with LCP 85-384, HoCP 85-845, HoCP 91-555, and HoCP 96-540 in 51 combine-harvested, replicated trials on light- and heavy-textured soils from 2001 to 2003.

| Variety | Sugar per Acre (lbs/A) | Cane Yield (tons/A) | Sugar Per Ton (lbs/ton) | Stalk Weight (lbs) | Stalk Number (stalks/A) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Plant-cane crop (28)[1] | | | |
| LCP85-384 | 7714 | 29.4 | 262 | 2.16 | 27743 |
| HoCP85-845 | 7241 - | 29.3 | 248 - | 2.38 + | 24769 - |
| HoCP91-555 | 7647 | 29.0 | 264 | 2.17 | 27314 |
| HoCP96-540 | 8730 + | 32.9 + | 265 | 2.70 + | 24948 - |
| **L97-128** | **8643 +** | **32.3 +** | **267** | **2.67 +** | **24410 -** |
| | | First-stubble crop (16)[1] | | | |
| LCP85-384 | 7606 | 28.0 | 272 | 1.80 | 31772 |
| HoCP85-845 | 7099 - | 27.3 | 261 - | 2.04 + | 27316 - |
| HoCP91-555 | 7117 | 25.8 - | 276 | 1.84 | 28813 - |
| HoCP96-540 | 7756 | 28.9 | 270 | 2.21 + | 26577 - |
| **L97-128** | **7725** | **27.8** | **280 +** | **2.20 +** | **25177 -** |
| | | Second-stubble crop (7)[1] | | | |
| LCP85-384 | 6298 | 24.0 | 264 | 1.59 | 30216 |
| HoCP85-845 | 5829 | 24.0 | 244 - | 1.89 + | 25518 - |
| HoCP91-555 | 6518 | 23.8 | 275 + | 1.63 | 29530 |
| HoCP96-540 | 6335 | 24.5 | 260 | 1.86 + | 26320 - |
| **L97-128** | **6768** | **24.4** | **280 +** | **1.91 +** | **26069 -** |

[1] Number in parentheses represents the total number of trials.
Varieties that are significantly higher or lower than LCP85-384 are denoted by a plus (+) or minus (-), respectively. The analysis was done with SAS (v9.0) using the PROC MIXED procedure which estimated least square means that were separated by the PDIFF option.

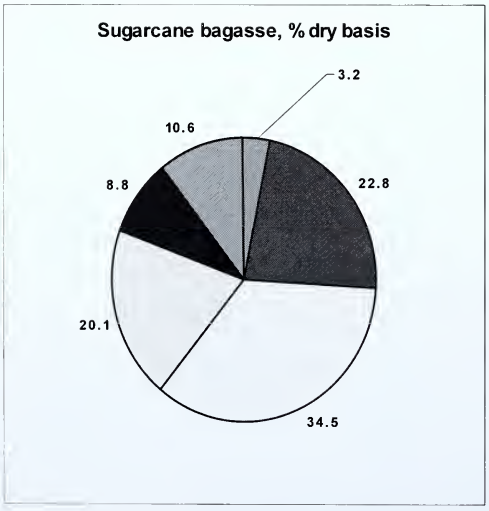
By Dr. Michael Saska
Audubon Sugar Institute
Louisiana State University AgCenter

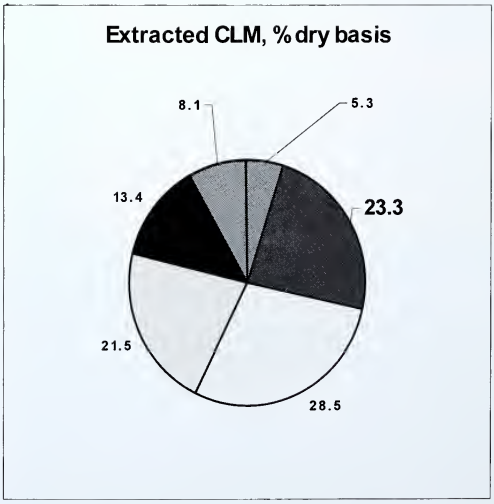
# Sugarcane Bio-Refinery: The Future of the Sugarcane Industry

A much talked about concept, the "bio-refinery" or agro-industrial equivalent of an oil refinery, where each component of the feedstock, sugarcane, corn or wood, is converted to the highest-value salable products, remains the topic of much R&D activity.

Of the non-juice parts of the sugarcane plant, the green leaves and tops (cane leaf matter or CLM), "excess" bagasse, and the factory effluents, viz. the filter cake, fly ash and molasses represent potential sources of new revenue to the millers and growers. The juice extracted from CLM is high in invert sugars, aconitic acid and other components, and its processing is investigated at Audubon. The residual fiber has composition similar to bagasse and can supplement excess bagasse to provide a feedstock for conversion of its components to useful products.

Unlike corn starch, cellulose is difficult to break down to fermentable sugars and pretreatment is required to improve accessibility of cellulose for enzymes. A process of treating biomass with dilute sulfuric acid in pressurized continuous digesters has been much studied at the Oak Ridge National Lab (ORNL) and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), two units of the U.S. Department of Energy. Although quite effective, the low pH environment and high temperatures lead to some sugar degradation, and as the products of the acid attack are quite toxic to the cellulase enzymes, "detoxification," by overliming in the NREL




*(data from Lee Madsen, Audubon Sugar Institute)*

process, is required. Alternatives to dilute acid are therefore being sought, and work continues, among others laboratories, in the framework of the CAFI project, a consortium of NREL and five academic institutions, Dartmouth College, Auburn, Texas A&M, Michigan State and Purdue. In the meantime, Iogen Corporation, a Canadian enzyme producer, in partnership with Royal Dutch Shell, Petro-Canada and the Canadian Government started operation of the first complete cellulose-to-ethanol demonstration plant in Ottawa. The first shipment of anhydrous ethanol for blending with gasoline in a Petro-Canada refinery in Montreal was reported in April of this year. Dedini in Brazil developed a process and is reported to operate a demonstration bagasse-to-ethanol facility, based on pretreating bagasse with acidified ethanol at high temperature and pressure.

As of now, the production costs for biomass ethanol are estimated around $1.20 to $1.50 per gallon, some two times higher than those for gasoline, but significant improvements are expected in the next few years. ZeaChem, a Colorado-based corporation claims a new process for ethanol production based on bacterial fermentation of sugars to acetic acid, followed by conversion of the acid to ethanol by esterification and hydrogenation. Since 2002 ZeaChem has had a joint development agreement with SRI, the Sugar Research Institute in Queensland, Australia, to apply this technology to the production of ethanol from bagasse. Elimination of carbon dioxide, a major byproduct of the standard yeast-based fermentation is to produce a 50% yield advantage over the traditional technology.

Lignin, a ubiquitous phenolic polymer of plant tissues is the binder of the cell walls providing cohesion and strength to the plant. It is released, in a modified form, during wood pulping, in pretreatment processes prior to enzymatic hydrolysis of cellulose to ethanol, or – if not removed in pretreatment - as a residue after the fermentation of cellulose and hemicellulose sugars. A 1 million ton market exists worldwide for lignosulfonates and Kraft lignins from pulping of wood but mostly in low-value applications due to its modified structure and high sulfur and ash levels. Granit, a Swiss company offers lignin extraction technology and buy-back arrangements to operators of biomass pulping plants. It is now reported to market lignin from a soda ash pulping of flax in France, and to be active in a number of projects, some possibly related to sugarcane bagasse. Their activities are expected to increase the availability of commercial quantities of high quality lignins in the foreseeable future. The bio-refinery lignin's structure and properties depend on the pretreatment conditions. The purest, least-modified product, free of sulfur and low in ash, comes from the so called organosolv pretreatment of biomass with ethanol. Lignol Innovations, a Vancouver, Canada, firm, is developing markets for this kind of lignin as a replacement for phenol-formaldehyde resins in oriented strand boards. A development project related to high fiber (energy) cane and supported by the Government of Canada is reported by Lignol to be underway on the island of Barbados. Biocidal and antioxidant properties of some forms of lignin have been reported, and the use as a substitute for antibiotics in animal feeds is being explored. Danish researchers report that up to 2% of lignin added to piglet feeds can be tolerated, potentially representing a sizeable new market for lignin in the 40 million ton feed market for piglets alone in Europe. Testing of organosolv pulping of sugarcane bagasse, and lignin development work are also reported from the Sugar Research Institute (SRI) in Australia. Conversion of lignin to carbon fibers is being investigated at ORNL in cooperation with the U.S. car industry.

The hemicellulose part of the biomass is rapidly hydrolyzed with dilute acid in the pretreatment step to C-5 and C-6 sugars that can be fermented to ethanol, although much less readily than sucrose, or can be converted to specialty chemicals. Xylitol, a specialty sweetener is now produced by Danisco, a multi-national food ingredient producer headquartered in Copenhagen, Denmark, from effluents of sulfite pulping of hardwoods. The expected phase-out of sulfite pulping in North America and Europe is thought to favor effluents from

*(Continued on page 21)*

By James F. Coerver, P.E.
G.E.C., Inc.

# Louisiana Administrative Law

On April 27, 2004, The Advocate of Baton Rouge reported that State District Court Judge Janice Clark recently ruled that the current Louisiana Administrative Law system is unconstitutional. The many private citizens and corporate entities that have been abused in this administrative law "justice" system are watching anxiously to see how the situation plays out. The Louisiana Supreme Court has given attorneys until June 20, 2004 to file arguments on the constitutional issues.

Administrative law is the rules and regulations of various state agencies that have been delegated the authority to promulgate and enforce such rules by Acts of the Legislature. For instance, the voluminous rules of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) and those of the Department of Health and Human Services are administrative law whereas Acts of the Legislature itself are statutory law. Statutory laws including the Civil and Criminal Codes are enforced in state district courts such as the one in Baton Rouge where Judge Clark sits. District Courts, especially those in urban areas of the state, adjudicate a heavy case load including murders, armed robbery, highway traffic violations, successions, divorces and other criminal and civil matters. The district court system would be hard pressed if compelled to also adjudicate all of the comparatively trivial matters associated with enforcement of the numerous and ever growing number of rules (administrative law) created by the various state agencies.

In order to avoid overburdening the state district court system, Louisiana like other states established specific procedures for enforcing administrative law. Up until recently, the Louisiana system left responsibility with Department Secretaries to adjudicate rule enforcement disputes and assess appropriate fines for rule violations. Such rulings by a secretary were then subject to contest in the state district courts, and this provision helped to minimize abuse of the system by overzealous and/or incompetent department secretaries. The system worked well until it became overloaded by excessive, improper and onerous enforcement of environmental regulations. The expense of giving due process to a large number of contested accusations became very costly for LDEQ to handle, primarily because LDEQ overloaded the system with trivial and/or improper and unprovable accusations. Overload slippage allowed many genuine environmental transgressions to go unpunished.

In 1996, the Legislature changed the system by establishing an independent Division of Administrative Law (DAL) within the state Department of Civil Service. The new DAL assumed responsibility for adjudicating all administrative law disputes for all state agencies. This action released the LDEQ secretary from the requirement to have hearings on every contested issue, and from having administrative law "judges" on his payroll. Unfortunately, it also made it much easier for LDEQ to win (collect fines) from contested cases by extortion.

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Under this new setup, any contested rulings by a LDEQ secretary, including some obviously false accusations I have personal knowledge of, are referred to DAL located in Baton Rouge. Then, all parties are summoned by DAL to appear in Baton Rouge for a preliminary conference. A petitioner must then travel to Baton Rouge with attorney to register, all at significant expense. In one case I attended such a preliminary conference, but LDEQ did not even show up, and the judge informed me he had no authority to either dismiss the case or compel LDEQ to attend! The only thing other than registration that happens at these preliminary conferences is DAL directs further negotiations with LDEQ to settle the matter, which is obviously futile at this stage, and arranges for a later conference to determine when and if a trial will be scheduled. What this procedure does is compel the petitioner to face very large legal, consultant, witness and travel expenses if he wants "justice." LDEQ can thus easily coerce their victims to pay a large fine just to avoid the much more expensive LDEQ manipulation of DAL procedures. Is that really justice?

In 1999, the Legislature further amended the Administrative law adjudication system to prohibit any state agency from seeking judicial review of a DAL decision. It was over this provision that the matter ended up in Judge Clark's court. The Department of Insurance was unhappy with DAL's ruling on an insurance matter, and filed suite. However, Judge Clark found fault with the entire administrative law system for usurping powers reserved for the judiciary by the Louisiana Constitution.

It will certainly be interesting to see what the Louisiana Supreme Court rules. Hopefully, responsibility for adjudication of administrative law matters will be returned to the Department Secretaries, along with oversight by the district courts in a way that prevents the abuses and excesses that have made the present system a mockery of genuine justice.

## Milling Around *(continued from page 19)*

bio-refineries as a preferred source of C-5 sugars in the future.

Thermal conversion of bagasse to synthetic gas, a mixture of carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide and hydrogen, either for direct combustion or conversion to liquid fuels was a subject of a demonstration project by a consortium of the Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar Company, NREL and the State of Hawaii in the 1990's on the island of Maui. At present gasification is reported to be actively pursued in Australia (the Queensland Gasification Project), and, in cooperation with Termiska Processer AB, a Swedish firm, at Copersucar in Brazil and in Cuba. Catalytic conversion of methane from synthetic gas produced by steam-reforming of biomass, or from biogas, the methane-rich product of anaerobic digestion, to ethanol via acetic acid is studied at the Chemical Engineering Department at LSU. A study of biogas production from filter cake slurry was reported at Audubon last year. Blending the easily fermented filter cake slurry with bagasse, prior to anaerobic digestion, presents an interesting option, similar to a process reported from Brazil of anaerobic digestion of mixtures of bagasse and vinasse, the dilute effluent from the juice- or molasses-to-ethanol process.

Opportunities to produce biodegradable plastics, proteins or other high value products directly in the sugarcane plant through genetic modifications are being explored by Metabolix, a Cambridge, Massachusetts, firm and others.

Advancement and implementation of these concepts bodes very well, indeed, for the future of the sugarcane industry.

# THE 2003 LOUISIANA SUGARCANE VARIETY SURVEY

**Benjamin L. Legendre and Kenneth A. Gravois**

**LSU AgCenter, St. Gabriel Research Station, St. Gabriel, LA 70776**

A sugarcane variety survey was conducted during the summer of 2003 by the county agents in the 24 sugarcane-growing parishes of Louisiana to determine the variety makeup and distribution across the industry in the state. The information presented in this report was summarized from those individual parish surveys.

Agents in each sugarcane-producing parish collected acreage figures by variety and crop from growers in their respective parishes. Eight varieties, CP 65-357, CP 70-321, CP 72-370, LCP 82-89, LHo 83-153, LCP 85-384, HoCP 85-845 and HoCP 91-555, were listed along with "Others" in the survey. The category of others included, but was not limited to, small acreages of CP 67-412, CP 74-383, CP 76-331, CP 79-318 and LCP 86-454. Crop was divided into four categories, which included plant-cane, first-stubble, second-stubble and third-stubble and older crops. Additional information was collected as needed from the local Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices regarding acres of sugarcane grown in the parishes.

Actual acreages covered by this survey for each parish, region and the statewide total are shown in Table 1. Figure 1 shows the parishes where sugarcane is grown. Statewide, the area planted to sugarcane reported in this survey was 475,873 acres. This is 99.0% of the total acres planted to sugarcane as reported in Louisiana Agricultural Summary for 2003 (Anonymous 2003). Total area planted to sugarcane for the three regions, Bayou Teche, River-Bayou Lafourche and Northern, and parishes (counties) are shown in Table 1. The Bayou Teche region has the largest area planted to sugarcane, with 202,792 acres reported (42.6% of the total acreage), followed by the River-Bayou Lafourche region with 165,441 acres (34.8%) and the Northern area with 107,640 acres (22.6%).

**Table 1.** Total area planted to sugarcane in Louisiana by region and parish (county), 2003[1].

| Bayou Teche region | | River-Bayou Lafourche region | | Northern region | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Parish** | **Acres** | **Parish** | **Acres** | **Parish** | **Acres** |
| Acadia | 3,174 | Ascension | 14,215 | Avoyelles | 21,286 |
| Calcasieu | 4,244 | Assumption | 41,541 | East Baton Rouge | 560 |
| Cameron | 404 | Iberville | 36,033 | Evangeline | 3,115 |
| Iberia | 63,300 | Lafourche | 31,426 | Pointe Coupee | 32,876 |
| Jeff Davis | 5,450 | St. Charles | 2,196 | Rapides | 13,380 |
| Lafayette | 15,859 | St. James | 24,900 | St. Landry | 21,063 |
| St. Martin | 34,283 | St. John | 4,035 | West Baton Rouge | 15,360 |
| St. Mary | 43,140 | Terrebonne | 11,095 | | |
| Vermilion | 32,938 | | | | |
| Total | 202,792 | Total | 165,441 | Total | 107,640 |
| Total all regions: 475,873 | | | | | |

[1] Estimates are based on information obtained in variety surveys in 2003 by the county agents.

The estimated statewide sugarcane acreage in percent by variety and crop is shown in Table 2. The leading variety for 2003 was LCP 85-384, with 88% of the total acreage followed by HoCP 85-845, HoCP 91-555 and CP 70-321 and with 4, 4 and 3% of the total acreage, respectively. These are the only four varieties recommended for commercial planting in Louisiana (Legendre 2001) although a fifth variety, HoCP 96-540, was released for commercial use during 2003 (Knipling et al. 2003). LCP 85-384 continues to increase in popularity amongst growers since its release in 1993. No other variety occupied more than 1% of the total acreage in the current survey. Although LCP 85-384 was planted on 88% of the total area in the state, it occupied 90% of the plant-cane crop and 89% of the first-stubble crop in 2003.

**Table 2.** Estimated statewide sugarcane acreage percentage by variety and crop, all regions, 2003[1].

| Variety | Plant-cane | First-stubble | Second-stubble | Third-stubble and older | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % | | | | |
| CP 65-357 | <1 | <1 | <1 | <1 | <1 |
| CP 70-321 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 |
| CP 72-370 | <1 | <1 | <1 | <1 | <1 |
| LCP 82-89 | <1 | <1 | <1 | 1 | <1 |
| LHo 83-153 | <1 | <1 | <1 | <1 | <1 |
| LCP 85-384 | 90 | 89 | 87 | 86 | 88 |
| HoCP 85-845 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 4 |
| HoCP 91-555 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| Others | <1 | <1 | <1 | <1 | <1 |
| Total acres | 112,782 | 117,065 | 118,016 | 128,010 | 475,873 |
| Percent total crop (%) | 23.7 | 24.6 | 24.8 | 26.9 | |

[1] Based on information obtained in variety surveys in 2003 by county agents.

As in previous years (Legendre & Gravois 2003), the Northern region tends to plant less cane each year and to keep more of its acreage in stubble crops, especially third and older (Table 3). For the current survey, the Northern area had 23.2% in plant cane compared to 34.3% in third and older stubble. On the other hand, the River-Bayou Lafourche region tends to plant more cane each year, with less of its area committed to stubble crops. However, for the current year the River-Bayou Lafourche region had only 23.3% of its area in plant cane while 23.6% of its area was in third stubble and older. This reduced planting occurred because of Tropical Storm Isidore and Hurricane Lilly and the rainy weather that followed throughout the harvest. More cane was planted in the Bayou Teche region (24.3%) while the acreage reported in third and older stubble was intermediate between the other two regions (25.6%). In recent years, there has been a general tendency by the industry statewide to plant less cane while keeping more acreage in older stubble. Two of the four recommended varieties, LCP 85-384 and HoCP 85-845, are listed as very good stubbling varieties, and HoCP 91-555 is listed as moderate to good in its stubble behavior (Legendre 2001).

**Table 3.** Estimated sugarcane distribution by region and crop, 2003[1].

| Crop | Bayou Teche | River-Bayou Lafourche | Northern | State total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Plant-cane | | | | |
| Area (acres) | 49,250 | 38,571 | 25,004 | 112,825 |
| Percent (%) | 24.3 | 23.3 | 23.2 | 23.7 |
| First-stubble | | | | |
| Area (acres) | 52,538 | 43,638 | 21,057 | 117,233 |
| Percent (%) | 25.9 | 26.4 | 19.6 | 24.6 |
| Second-stubble | | | | |
| Area (acres) | 49,107 | 44,1802 | 24,703 | 117,990 |
| Percent (%) | 24.2 | 26.7 | 22.9 | 24.8 |
| Third-stubble and older | | | | |
| Area (acres) | 51,897 | 39,052 | 36,876 | 127,825 |
| Percent (%) | 25.6 | 23.6 | 34.3 | 26.9 |
| | | | | |
| Total acres | 202,792 | 165,441 | 107,640 | 475,873 |

[1] Based on information obtained in variety surveys in 2003 by county agents.

LCP 85-384 was the preferred variety in all regions (Tables 4, 5 and 6). In the Bayou Teche region, LCP 85-384 was the leading variety with 87% of the total area followed by CP 70-321 with 5% and HoCP 85-845 and HoCP 91-555 with 4% each (Table 4). LCP 85-384 occupied 89% of the area in the River-Bayou Lafourche region (Table 5). HoCP 85-845 was the second most popular variety with 6% of the planted area followed by 3% for HoCP 91-555 and only 1% for CP 70-321. For the Northern region, LCP 85-384 occupied 89% of the planted area (Table 6). HoCP 85-845 and HoCP 91-555 were next with 4% each followed by CP 70-321 with 3%. Again, there was a tendency for even higher percentages for LCP 85-384 in the plant-cane and first-stubble crops in all three regions, indicating that the variety has yet to reach its peak.

**Table 4.** Estimated area planted to sugarcane in percent by variety and crop for the Bayou Teche region, 2003[1].

| Variety | Plant-cane crop (%) | First-stubble crop (%) | Second-stubble crop (%) | Third-stubble crop & older (%) | Total (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CP 65-357 | <1 | <1 | <1 | <1 | <1 |
| CP 70-321 | 3 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 5 |
| CP 72-370 | <1 | <1 | <1 | <1 | <1 |
| LCP 82-89 | <1 | <1 | <1 | 1 | <1 |
| LHo 83-153 | 0 | <1 | 0 | <1 | <1 |
| LCP 85-384 | 86 | 87 | 86 | 87 | 87 |
| HoCP 85-845 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 4 |
| HoCP 91-555 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 4 |
| Others | <1 | <1 | <1 | <1 | <1 |
| Totals | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

 [1] Based on information obtained in variety surveys in 2003 by county agents.

**Table 5**. Estimated area planted to sugarcane in percent by variety and crop for the River/ Bayou Lafourche region, 2003[1].

| Variety | Plant-cane crop (%) | First-stubble crop (%) | Second-stubble crop (%) | Third-stubble crop & older (%) | Total (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CP 65-357 | <1 | 0 | <1 | <1 | <1 |
| CP 70-321 | <1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| CP 72-370 | 0 | <1 | <1 | <1 | <1 |
| LCP 82-89 | 0 | 0 | <1 | 2 | 1 |
| LHo 83-153 | <1 | <1 | 1 | 1 | <1 |
| LCP 85-384 | 94 | 92 | 88 | 82 | 89 |
| HoCP 85-845 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 12 | 6 |
| HoCP 91-555 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 3 |
| Others | <1 | <1 | <1 | <1 | <1 |
| Totals | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

[1] Based on information obtained in variety surveys in 2003 by county agents.

**Table 6**. Estimated area planted to sugarcane in percent by variety and crop for the Northern region, 2003[1].

| Variety | Plant-cane crop (%) | First-stubble crop (%) | Second-stubble crop (%) | Third-stubble crop & older (%) | Total (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CP 65-357 | 0 | 0 | 0 | <1 | <1 |
| CP 70-321 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 5 | 3 |
| CP 72-370 | 0 | 0 | 0 | <1 | <1 |
| LCP 82-89 | 0 | <1 | 0 | 1 | <1 |
| LHo 83-153 | 0 | 0 | <1 | <1 | <1 |
| LCP 85-384 | 92 | 89 | 88 | 87 | 89 |
| HoCP 85-845 | <1 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 4 |
| HoCP 91-555 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Others | <1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | <1 |
| Totals | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

[1] Based on information obtained in variety surveys in 2003 by county agents.

Only two varieties, LCP 85-384 and HoCP 91-555, showed an increase in the acreage occupied in 2003 when compared to the previous year (Table 7) (Legendre & Gravois 2003). LCP 85-384 increased by 3%, and HoCP 91-555 increased by 1%. All other varieties in the survey either decreased in area or remained the same from the previous year. CP 70-321 continues its decline in popularity with a decrease of 2% from crop year 2002. CP 70-321 occupied 49% of the planted acreage as late as 1995; however, with the release of LCP 85-384 in 1993, its acreage has been steadily declining. Only one other variety, CP 65-357, released in 1973, reached more than 70% of the total acreage with a high of 71% in 1980. LCP 85-384 now occupies 17 percent more acreage than CP 65-357 occupied when that variety was at its peak. LCP 85-384 is a high-yielding, excellent-stubbling variety; however, after lower cane yields experienced during the 2003 crop, skeptics feel that the variety is in "decline." However, much of this so-called decline can be attributed to the greater than normal amount of third and older stubble as well as the residual effect of the horrendous harvest conditions in 2002 following the two tropical systems and record rainfall that fell during the harvest. Almost all fields were rutted to the point that drainage was severely impaired. Further, because of the variety's tendency to lodge and the poor harvesting conditions, combine operators set bottom blades at below ground level to reduce the amount of scrap (loss) at harvest. LCP 85-384 produces a large number of small stalks and consistently outyields the other three recommended varieties in tons of cane and sugar per acre (Garrison et al. 2003).

**Table 7**. Louisiana sugarcane variety trends, by variety and years, all regions, 1999-2003[1].

| | Area planted to sugarcane by variety and years (%) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Variety | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 1 yr. Change |
| CP 65-357 | 1 | 1 | 1 | <1 | <1 | 0 |
| CP 70-321 | 20 | 13 | 8 | 5 | 3 | -2 |
| CP 72-370 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | <1 | -1 |
| LCP 82-89 | 5 | 2 | 1 | <1 | <1 | 0 |
| LHo 83-153 | 3 | 2 | 1 | <1 | <1 | 0 |
| LCP 85-384 | 58 | 71 | 78 | 85 | 88 | +3 |
| HoCP 85-845 | 8 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 4 | -2 |
| HoCP 91-555 | <1 | <1 | 1 | 3 | 4 | +1 |
| Others | <1 | <1 | 1 | <1 | <1 | 0 |
| Totals | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | |

[1] Based on annual variety surveys from county agents in sugarcane-producing parishes, 1999- 2003.

It is anticipated that LCP 85-384 will continue to gain in popularity for the near term because of its superior yielding ability in tons of cane and sugar per acre and will remain the top variety in the state until comparable or superior varieties are released for commercial production from the breeding program. HoCP 96-540 was released for commercial use in 2003 (Knipling et al. 2003). This

variety has the potential to replace significant acreage now occupied by LCP 85-384, depending on its productivity under commercial field conditions. It is further anticipated that the remaining varieties will continue to decrease in total acreage, with the possible exception of HoCP 91-555. HoCP 91-555 is being considered as a possible alternative to LCP 85-384 by some growers; however, it appears that the increase in acreage in future years, if any, will be minimal. It is not anticipated that this variety will ever become a major variety statewide (exceeding 25% of the planted area).

Over 90% of the Louisiana sugarcane crop is now harvested by combine to take advantage of the superior yielding ability of LCP 85-384; however, with the lower yields experienced in 2003, many growers reverted back to the whole-stalk "soldier" system for harvesting their crops. Time will tell if this trend continues. From all the data thus far, it appears that HoCP 96-540 is a better harvesting variety when compared to LCP 85-384, and some growers might switch to HoCP 96-540 to take advantage of this one characteristic so long as they are not sacrificing yield of sugar per acre.

Most sugarcane-producing areas of the world do not place a high dependence on a single variety, as is the case in Louisiana (Tew 1987). The need to avoid genetic vulnerability was seen in Cuba several years ago when its growers suffered substantial yield losses because of a rust epidemic and the heavy dependence on one variety, B 4362. As a result, guidelines were established in Cuba advising growers not to plant more than 30% of their area to B 4362, their leading commercial variety. A similar situation occurred recently in Australia with Q124 and susceptibility to orange rust. However, once a clearly superior variety is found, the inadvisability of becoming highly dependent on a single variety must be weighed against the increased profitability anticipated from the culture of only one variety. Occasionally expectations will outweigh potential risk considerations (Tew 1987).

In Louisiana, LCP 85-384 is now considered susceptible to rust as well; however, it appears that rust is not causing a significant reduction in its yield. Another disease was found in LCP 85-384 in recent years, sugarcane yellow leaf virus (Grisham et al. 2001); however, it appears that the variety is also tolerant to this disease as well. In a continuing effort to lessen the dependence of the industry on one variety, the Louisiana variety development program is constantly striving to develop other new, superior varieties that are as good as or better than LCP 85-384; however, the task has not been an easy one. Besides the recent release of HoCP 96-540, there are two additional varieties, Ho 95-988 and L 97-128, that equal or exceed the yield of LCP 85-384 and are candidates for commercial release in 2004 (Ken Gravois, personal communication).

**(Figure 1 on Page 28)**

**Acknowledgments**

We acknowledge the assistance of the county agents for soliciting the sugarcane variety information published in this survey. We also want to thank the sugarcane producers who took the time and effort to respond to the survey from their agents.

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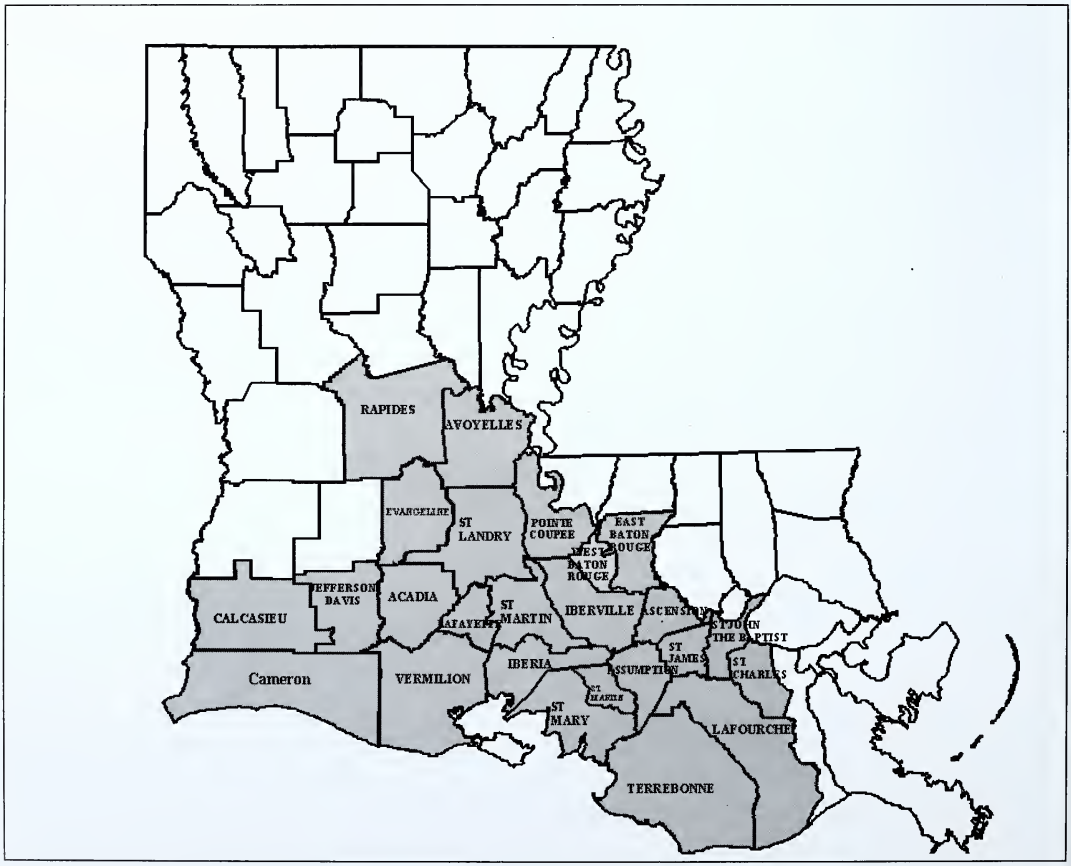
**Figure 1. Parishes (counties) in Louisiana where sugarcane is grown.**



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# A Report on the 2003 Outfield Variety Tests

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This report has been written to inform the Louisiana sugarcane industry of the agronomic performance of varieties harvested in the outfield variety tests during 2003. Outfield variety tests are conducted during the final three years of the 12-year multistage Louisiana sugarcane variety improvement program.

These tests are planted, harvested, and evaluated cooperatively by the Agricultural Research Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, Louisiana State University Agricultural Center, and the American Sugar Cane League.

In 2003, 28 outfield tests were mechanically harvested at nine locations throughout the sugarcane belt (Table 1). These tests were on sugarcane farms with typical soils for that region. The planting and harvest date, as well as the soil type and region, for each outfield test location are also presented. Yield data were obtained using combine harvesters provided by growers at each test location and a three-ton, single-axle, high-dump weigh wagon equipped with electronic load cells to record cane weight. Each row of either a two-row or three-row plot was harvested by combine and loaded into the weigh wagon so that the plot weights could be recorded. Plot weights were used to calculate tons of cane per acre, and a 15 whole-stalk sample was cut from each plot prior to harvesting for a quality analysis. From the quality analysis, the yield of theoretical recoverable sugar per ton of cane was estimated from the Brix and sucrose obtained for each sample (3). Sugar per acre (lbs/acre) was estimated as the product of tons of cane per acre and sugar per ton of cane. Additional reference information on the procedure used for data collection and preparation is given at the end of this report (1, 2).

In previous years, this report included separate tables for light soil and heavy soil results. In 2002, Tropical Storm Isidore, Hurricane Lili, and heavy rainfall during the planting season prevented one heavy soil location from being planted. This resulted in fewer heavy soil locations available for harvest in 2003. Because of this, yield data for the light soils and heavy soils were combined for data analysis (Table 2). Included in the table are data from eight plant-cane, nine first-stubble, nine second-stubble, and two third-stubble tests. The table includes data for sugar per acre, tons of cane per acre, sugar per ton of cane, stalk weight and stalk population. Discussion in this report will focus primarily on sugar per acre. For convenience, the commercial variety used as a standard for comparison, LCP 85-384, is highlighted in the data table. Since 1998, this variety has occupied more acreage than any other commercial variety in Louisiana. In 2003, LCP 85-384 was planted on 88% of the sugarcane acreage (4).

To adjust for missing data, the statistical analysis calculated least square means using the PROC MIXED procedure (SAS 8.2). Mean separation was accomplished using least square mean probability differences, where a probability level of $\leq 0.05$ was considered significant. Varieties with statistically higher values than LCP 85-384 are indicated by a plus (+), and those with statistically lower values are indicated by a minus (-) next to each trait reported.

The two most recently released varieties to the Louisiana sugar industry are Ho 95-988 and L 97-128. Ho 95-988 was selected from a cross of CP 86-941 x US 89-12 made in the basic breeding

program at the USDA-ARS Sugarcane Research Unit at Houma. Ho 95-988 was planted in the outfield variety tests in 1998 and replanted in tests in 1999. This variety was dropped in 2000 because of susceptibility to smut, but data collection was continued in outfield testing for breeding purposes. Ho 95-988 was brought back to active status after yield data and stubbling information looked favorable. Yields of sugar per acre for Ho 95-988 were not significantly different than LCP 85-384 in third-stubble tests in 2003 on all soils. Ho 95-988 is classified as resistant to mosaic and the spread of ratoon stunting disease, moderately resistant to leaf scald and rust, moderately susceptible to smut, and susceptible to the sugarcane borer. Hot water treated seed was reintroduced to the outfield tests in 2003 for continued testing. The American Sugar Cane League also increased hot water treated seed on primary increase stations, and seed of Ho 95-988 was sent to secondary increase stations in 2003. There will be a limited amount of seed available from a private seed cane company in 2004. Seed from the secondary increase stations will be available in 2005.

L97-128, selected from a cross between LCP 81-10 and LCP 85-384, was harvested in plant-cane, first-stubble and second-stubble tests in 2003. The new variety was not statistically different from LCP 85-384 in sugar per acre in each of the three crops across all soil types. L 97-128 is early maturing and had statistically higher sugar per ton of cane in both the first- and second-stubble crops. The new variety also emerges quickly after planting and has vigorous early growth. L 97-128 is classified as resistant to mosaic, moderately resistant to leaf scald and rust, moderately susceptible to smut, and susceptible to the sugarcane borer. The variety is erect and harvests well. Seed cane will be available from secondary increase stations in 2004. HoCP 96-540 was harvested in plant-cane, first-stubble, second-stubble, and third-stubble tests in 2003. In 2003, HoCP 96-540 yielded significantly more sugar per acre than LCP 85-384 in plant-cane on all soils. HoCP 96-540 is classified as resistant to smut and mosaic, moderately resistant to rust and leaf scald and moderately susceptible to the sugarcane borer. Based on harvest observations, this variety tends to be more erect than LCP 85-384 and, even when lodged, appears to be better suited for combine harvesting. Selected from a cross between LCP 86-454 and LCP 85-384, HoCP 96-540 was released to the Louisiana sugar industry and distributed to growers from secondary increase stations in 2003.

Other experimental varieties in the outfield were TucCP 77-42, L 98-209, L 99-226, and L 99-233. L 98-209 was harvested both in plant-cane and first-stubble in 2003 and was not significantly different from LCP 85-384 in the yield of sugar per acre on all soils. The variety is early maturing, as shown by its statistically higher sugar per ton of cane than LCP 85-384 in the first stubble crop. TucCP 77-42 was developed through cooperative research of the Estacion Experimental Agro-Industrial Obispo Colombres, Tucuman, Argentina, and the USDA-ARS (5). It was released in the fall of 1987 to the sugarcane industry in the Province of Tucuman in Argentina. TucCP 77-42 was introduced to the outfield in 2000 for testing and planted at all test locations in 2001. In sugar per acre on all soils, TucCP 77-42 was not significantly different from LCP 85-384. The Argentine variety is characterized as having high tons of cane per acre and low sugar per ton of cane. L 99-226 and L 99-233 were harvested in plant-cane only in 2003. L 99-226 had statistically higher sugar per acre, tons of cane per acre, and sugar per ton of cane than LCP 85-384. L 99-233 had sugar per acre yields that were statistically equivalent to LCP 85-384. Detailed yield comparisons are shown in Table 2.

Of the commercial varieties on all soils in sugar per acre, HoCP 91-555 yielded significantly lower than LCP 85-384 in first-stubble, and CP 70-321 yielded significantly lower than the standard variety in both second- and third-stubble crops. Detailed yield comparisons are shown in Table 2.

**Acknowledgments**

Sincere appreciation is expressed to the growers who participate in the many different stages of the Louisiana sugarcane variety improvement program. The continued advancement of the Louisiana sugarcane industry depends on the dedication and commitment of many individuals throughout the industry.

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**Table 1.** Planting and harvest dates, soil types and regions, for nine outfield locations during 2003.

| Location | Plant-cane | | First-stubble | | Second-stubble | | Third Stubble | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Harvest | Planted | Harvest | Planted | Harvest | Planted | Harvest | Planted |
| | 2003 | 2002 | 2003 | 2001 | 2003 | 2000 | 2003 | 1999 |
| **Light Soil** | | | | | | | | |
| Alma [3] | 11/03 | 09/04 | 11/03 | 09/14 | 10/23 | 08/30 | ** | * |
| Bon Secour[1] | 12/03 | 09/03 | 12/03 | 09/08 | 11/05 | 08/24 | 11/05 | 09/13 |
| Georgia [1] | 12/16 | 09/21 | 12/16 | 09/15 | 12/16 | 09/19 | ** | 08/24 |
| Glenwood [1] | 11/10 | 08/29 | 10/27 | 09/25 | 10/27 | 08/23 | ** | 08/26 |
| Lanaux [1] | 11/19 | 09/11 | 11/18 | 09/05 | 10/09 | 09/06 | ** | 09/15 |
| Levert- St. John[2] | 11/17 | 09/11 | 10/29 | 09/19 | 10/29 | 09/01 | ** | 08/18 |
| R.Hebert [2] | 12/09 | 09/18 | 12/12 | 09/27 | 11/07 | 09/05 | 11/07 | 08/25 |
| **Heavy Soil** | | | | | | | | |
| Allain [2] | ** | * | 11/06 | 09/19 | 11/06 | 09/27 | ** | 09/14 |
| Magnolia [1] | 10/28 | 08/16 | 10/28 | 10/04 | 10/28 | 10/04 | ** | 08/23 |

* No test planted at this location.

** No test harvested at this location.

[1] Mississippi River/Bayou Lafourche region

[2] Bayou Teche region

[3] Northern region

**Table 2.** Combined analysis of outfield tests for plant-cane, first-stubble,second-stubble, and through third-stubble crops on light and heavy soil locations during 2003.

| Variety | Sugar/A (lbs) | Tons/A (tons) | Sugar/T (lbs) | St. Wt. (lbs) | Population (no./acre) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Plant-cane crop at eight locations** | | | | | |
| **LCP 85-384** | **7782** | **28.5** | **273** | **2.17** | **27264** |
| HoCP 85-845 | 7423 | 30.2 | 248 - | 2.26 | 26911 |
| HoCP 91-555 | 7660 | 27.6 | 278 | 2.11 | 26994 |
| HoCP 96-540 | 8469 + | 31.3 + | 271 | 2.72 + | 24434 |
| L 97-128 | 8402 | 30.9 | 274 | 2.47 + | 25319 |
| L 98-209 | 8070 | 28.7 | 282 | 2.67 + | 22007 - |
| L 99-226 | 9154 + | 31.4 + | 292 + | 2.93 + | 22843 - |
| L 99-233 | 8405 | 31.7 + | 267 | 2.01 | 33165+ |
| **First-stubble crop at nine locations** | | | | | |
| TucCP 77-042 | 8082 | 32.6 + | 248 - | 2.30 + | 28646 |
| **LCP 85-384** | **7920** | **28.7** | **276** | **1.89** | 31347 |
| HoCP 85-845 | 7412 | 28.5 | 261 - | 2.05 + | 28292 - |
| HoCP 91-555 | 7157 - | 25.5 - | 281 | 1.93 | 27297 - |
| HoCP 96-540 | 7455 | 27.3 | 272 | 2.21 + | 25039 - |
| L 97-128 | 7985 | 27.8 | 288 + | 2.21 + | 25122 - |
| L 98-209 | 8254 | 28.9 | 286 + | 2.09 + | 28318 - |
| **Second-stubble crop at nine locations** | | | | | |
| CP 70-321 | 5142 - | 20.3 - | 254 | 1.87 + | 21696 - |
| **LCP 85-384** | **6298** | **24.0** | **264** | **1.59** | **30216** |
| HoCP 85-845 | 5829 | 24.0 | 244 - | 1.89 + | 25518 - |
| HoCP 91-555 | 6518 | 23.8 | 275 + | 1.63 | 29530 |
| HoCP 96-540 | 6335 | 24.5 | 260 | 1.86 + | 26320 - |
| L 97-128 | 6768 | 24.4 | 280 + | 1.91 + | 26069 - |
| **Third-stubble crop at two locations** | | | | | |
| CP 70-321 | 5926 - | 23.5 - | 250 | 2.00 + | 23516 - |
| **LCP 85-384** | **7567** | **29.9** | **253** | **1.43** | **45311** |
| HoCP 85-845 | 6678 | 26.7 | 250 | 1.66 | 32447 - |
| HoCP 91-555 | 6855 | 25.8 | 264 | 1.68 | 31625 - |
| Ho 95-988 | 7454 | 27.6 | 269 | 1.80 + | 30961 - |
| HoCP 96-540 | 7806 | 30.4 | 255 | 2.06 + | 29762 - |

(+) or (-) denotes yields which are statistically higher or lower than LCP 85-384, respectively.

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1:30 p.m. Howard Johnson Lodge
Thibodaux, LA

**August 3, 2004 - Certified Pre-Burn Management Training Meeting**
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**Volume 82, No. 10** **July 2004**

# THE SUGAR BULLETIN

**Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A.**

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The mission of the American Sugar Cane League is to sustain success through effective research, positive legislation, public relations/promotion, and education.

# The Sugar Bulletin

The Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A., Inc.

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June 17, 2004

Mr. Jerry McKee
Laurel Valley Plantation Inc.
P.O. Box 702
Thibodaux, LA 70302

Dear Jerry,

On behalf of the entire membership I want to thank you for the outstanding service you performed for the league as interim general manager. Since Charlie Melancon's resignation in February of this year you have voluntarily given to this organization your time and abundant talents. For this we are all grateful.

These recent months have been turbulent for the league. On several occasions we have found ourselves making decisions of grave and lasting consequence. Because of your experience, wisdom, and steadiness, you brought valuable guidance to these difficult times. Your presence and wise counsel have been a comfort to me, and your wit and humor has helped lighten the load.

The transition to our new general manager, Jim Simon, has begun. As you have already done, we continue to look to you for guidance and help in bringing Jim on board.

Again, thank you.

Sincerely,
*John F. Gay*
John F. Gay
President

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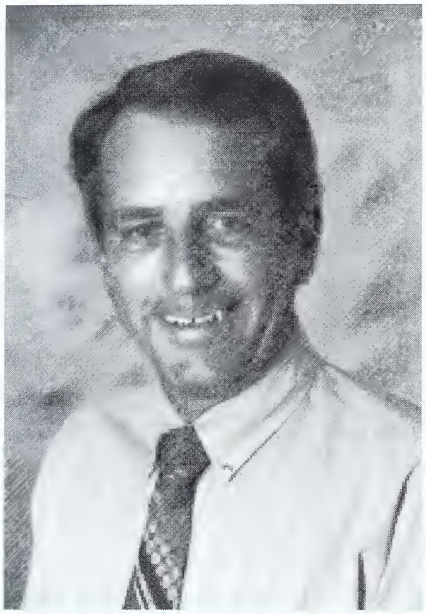

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# UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Jim Simon

## As Your New General Manager
## Thanks to John and Jerry - Office Staff
## Strategic Plan - Thought

I am honored and excited to have been selected as the new General Manager of the American Sugar Cane League. I take this opportunity to thank the members of the search committee for the professional and courteous manner in which the interview process was handled. Their questioning was complete and thorough. No stones were left unturned.

I accept this position with full awareness of the tremendous responsibility I have to be prudent, effective and efficient in managing the resources that you provided to this 82-year-old organization. Managing the financial resources is crucial, but we must also be very effective with how we manage the time and talent resources that you so graciously give to the League.

At this point in our history it is imperative that I be accessible to all of our members. I am working hard to do just that. As of this writing, I have been with the league just over a week, and I have met several farmers individually and in groups. Plans are in place to do much more of that in the next few weeks, as my calendar is marked with the remaining field days. I hope to meet as many growers as possible before planting starts. I have also met with many of the processors and hope to see the rest of that group in the near future. If there are other opportunities to meet with league members in a group setting please let me know.

As I travel the belt I continue to be very warmly received. Just as expected I find people who are genuinely interested in helping this organization overcome its recent difficulties. It is my primary task to refocus our energy so that we can proactively pursue our mission to **"SUSTAIN SUCCESS THROUGH EFFECTIVE REASERCH, POSITVE LEGISLATION, PUBLIC RELATIONS/ PROMOTION, AND EDUCATION."**

**Thanks to John and Jerry**

Many thanks to our President John Gay and interim General Manager Jerry McKee for the support and assistance they have given me. They are true gentlemen and always represent the league in an honest and professional manner. They have both taken a substantial amount of time away from their farming operations to acclimate me to my new position. I sincerely appreciate their efforts.

**Office Staff**

The staff of the league possesses a combined total of 80 years of service to the Louisiana sugar industry. That is significant base of experience for our organization. Nannette Nickens, Administrative Assistant; John Constant, Business Manager; and our Agronomists Windell Jackson and Herman Waguespack have

made me feel right at home in the office. I look forward to working with them as we move on a path to continuously improving the level of service that we provide our members.

**Strategic Plan**

As you may be aware, the League has been working on the development of a new Strategic Plan. The Plan will clarify our mission and put into place the process, philosophy and structure by which we do business. Rick and Karen Moore with Two Moore Solutions, Inc. are helping us develop this plan. Your thoughts and comments as we go through this process are very important. I encourage you to contact me at any time to give your input.

**Thought**

*"Any challenge facing us is not as important as our attitude toward it, from that determines our success or failure."-Norman Vincent Peale*


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# Sugar Market Outlook and Marketing Allotments

Michael E. Salassi
LSU Agricultural Center

On June 10, 2004, the USDA released its latest supply and demand estimates for the U.S. sugar market for the 2004/05 fiscal year (2004 crop year). The only change from the May estimate was a 23,000 ton reduction in beginning stocks carried over from the 2003/04 fiscal year. Despite a projected decrease in 2004/05 production of both beet sugar and cane sugar from 2003/04, the substantial increase in beginning stocks is projected to cause total U.S. sugar supply to increase in the 2004 crop year. Estimated beginning sugar stocks on October 1, 2004 are projected to be 2.2 million tons, 32 percent higher than in the previous year. With little change in overall sugar demand and use, the estimated increase in 2004/05 sugar supply is projected to further increase ending stocks to 2.326 million tons by Sept. 30, 2005.

The stocks-to-use ratio for the current year (2003/04) is projected at 21.9% and is expected to increase to 23.1% next year. Stocks-to-use ratio is a measure of the percent of total sugar demand which ending stocks can meet. Increases in this ratio are an indication that lower amounts of production are necessary to meet total sugar demand. The last time the stocks-to-use ratio was this high was in 1999/00 when it reached 21.9% and the fiscal year average raw sugar price dropped to 18.40 cents per pound.

**U. S. Sugar Supply and Use**

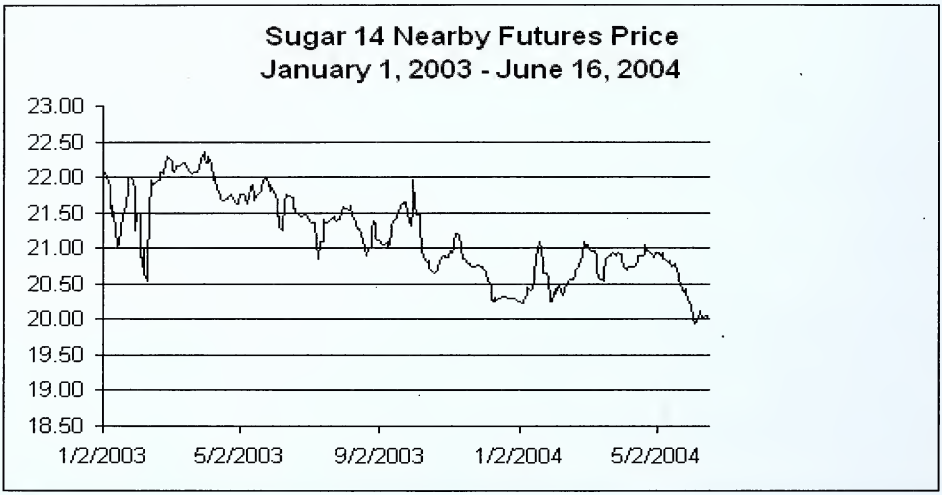
| | **2003/04** | **2004/05** |
|---|---|---|
| | *1,000 short tons, raw value* | |
| Beginning stocks | 1,661 | 2,200 |
| Production: | 8,940 | 8,590 |
| Beet sugar | 4,863 | 4,520 |
| Cane sugar | 4,077 | 4,070 |
| Imports | 1,659 | 1,591 |
| Total supply | 12,260 | 12,381 |
| | | |
| Exports | 200 | 150 |
| Deliveries | 9,860 | 9,905 |
| Total use | 10,060 | 10,055 |
| Ending stocks | 2,200 | 2,326 |
| Stocks-to-use ratio | 21.9 | 23.1 |

*Source:* June 10, 2004 WASDE Report, USDA

Currently, excess sugar in the domestic market has been the primary reason for the general decline in raw sugar prices over the last year and a half. During the first few months of 2003, raw sugar prices (No. 14 nearby futures price) was trading in the 22-cent range. Excess sugar supplies have brought those prices down and are continuing to hold them down. The June 16, 2004 nearby futures closed at 20.01 cents.

Based upon the current demand and supply estimates, the overall allotment quantity for the 2004 crop season should be near 7.75 million tons of sugar, raw value. This would result in a total marketing allotment for Louisiana of 1.27 to 1.30 million tons, raw value. The proportionate share percentage (i.e., the percent of base acreage which could be harvested for sugar and seed) would be approximately 76-77 percent based on this total allocation.

Considering the large quantities of ending stocks predicted for the 2003/04 year and the fact that 2004/05 sugar production may exceed market requirements, thereby causing an increase in "blocked stocks," the USDA has hinted that it might announce the 2004/05 overall allotment quantity (O.A.Q.) and state marketing allotments in July, a month earlier than normal. The USDA has also reminded processors that the 2002 Farm Act places the burden of storing surplus sugar production on the domestic industry. The USDA has also warned that if there are sugar loan forfeitures to the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), the CCC will attempt to return its sugar inventory to the market as expeditiously as possible. Such actions are not a good sign for an already depressed market.




# Upcoming Events

**August 3, 2004 - Certified Pre-Burn Management Training Meeting**
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***This reference guide is not intended as a substitute for the product label for the products referenced herein. Product labels for the above products contain important precautions, directions for use and product warranty and liability limitations that must be read before using the product. Applicators must be in possession of the product label(s) at the time of application. Always read and follow all label directions and precautions for use when using any pesticide alone or in tank mix combinations. Always wear proper protective equipment.***

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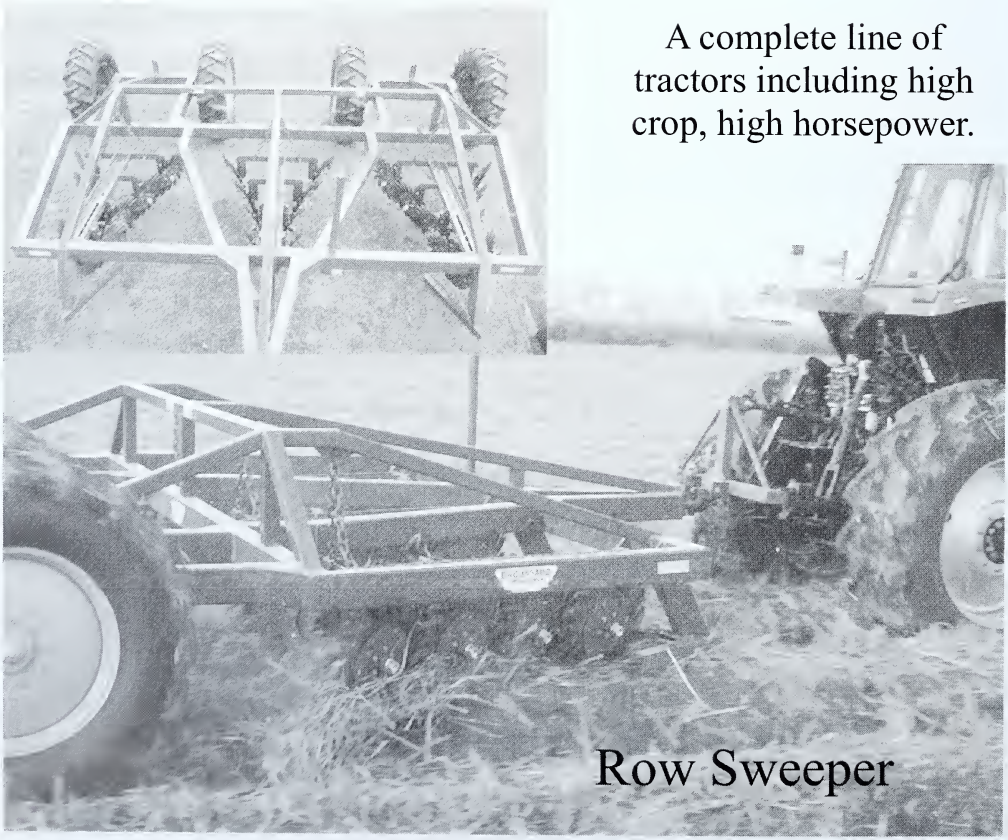

Row Sweeper

# WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

## Appropriations - CAFTA Efforts
## USDA WASDE June Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The House agricultural appropriations package began to move in mid-June, beginning with an initial subcommittee markup on June 14 and full committee markup one week later. While the details of the package remain unclear at the time of this writing, we anticipate that the full request for research funding for Houma will be included in that document despite the significant cut in overall discretionary spending for agriculture agreed to in the House budget resolution. In addition, the House package tentatively includes the construction funding for the new Houma station.

Rep. Mark Kirk (R-IL) has prepared an amendment to be introduced during the second phase of markups at the full committee level that would effectively prevent USDA from operating the sugar storage facility loan program. The storage loan provisions were included in the 2002 Farm Bill to be consistent with storage loan programs offered to other commodity producers and has not been utilized, so this may be a placeholder amendment. We are working with Rep. David Vitter (R-LA), a member of the House Appropriations Committee, to build opposition to this or any other sugar amendment.

In the Senate, the impasse on a budget agreement continues and indications are that the ag appropriations package may not be marked up until after the July 4th recess. Early indications are that the base funding for Houma is contained in the Senate package as well.

**CAFTA Efforts**

President Bush signed the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) on May 28 and is expected to sign the trade pact with the Dominican Republic by the end of June. These events are significant, but the legislative battles now seem unlikely to take place in this calendar year. While there would be time to bring the trade agreements to the House and Senate floor in an anticipated lame-duck session, the Administration is unlikely to send the draft implementing language to Capitol Hill during the election season this fall because of the potential damage that could do to the President's re-election hopes in November.

Typically, the Administration would send draft implementing language to the House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee for review and "mock" markup prior to sending the official language. To do otherwise would invite the wrath of Republican and Democratic Members alike.

U.S. Senate candidates Rep. David Vitter (R-LA) and Rep. Chris John (D-LA) have made forceful statements over the past few weeks in opposition to the CAFTA and should be thanked for their leadership on this issue. The entire Louisiana delegation will be back in their respective districts over the July 4th recess and the longer (six weeks) recess beginning in early August. These congressional breaks will present excellent opportunities for sugar-producing

constituents to voice their opposition to CAFTA and to urge the members to stand united to protect Louisiana jobs.

**USDA WASDE June Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released**

The USDA released its June World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. 2003/04 beginning stocks remained at 1,661,000. Production was decreased to 8,940,000 from 8,963,000 short tons last month, with beet production dropping to 4,863,000 from 4,875,000 short tons in May, and cane production falling to 4,077,000 from 4,088,000 short tons last month. Louisiana cane sugar production was unchanged at 1,458,000 short tons. Imports were unchanged at 1,659,000, resulting in a decrease in 2003/04 total supply to 12,260,000 from 12,283,000 short tons in May. Export sales were unchanged at 200,000, deliveries were unchanged at 9,860,000 short tons, and total uses remained at 10,060,000 short tons. This resulted in ending stocks of 2,200,000 from 2,223,000 short tons in May. The stocks-to-use ratio was lowered to 21.9 percent from 22.1 percent last month.

For 2004/05, total production remains at 8,590,000 short tons, with beet production at 4,520,000 and cane production at 4,070,000 short tons, both unchanged. Louisiana production remains projected at 1,575,000 short tons. Imports were unchanged at 1,591,000, reflecting TRQ imports of 1,206,000. The lower beginning stocks resulted in a decrease in total supply to 12,381,000 from 12,404,000 short tons in May. Exports remained at 150,000, deliveries at 9,905,000, and re-exports at 190,000. Total use was unchanged at 10,055,000 short tons, resulting in ending stocks of 2,326,000, versus 2,349,000 short tons in May, and a stocks-to-use ratio of 23.1 percent, slightly lower than the 23.4 percent for May.

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# ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

## Crop Report - Rust
## Secondary Stations - Smut In L 97-128

During the first two weeks of June, with ample soil moisture and an abundance of sunshine, fields of plant cane and younger stubble have grown very rapidly. There certainly should be "four for the fourth" (four exposed joints of cane by the 4th of July). At the time of this writing, in most fields of plant cane and first stubble at least two exposed joints cane can be observed.

Unfortunately, there are fields of older stubble, particularly those that are in soils with high clay content, that are not responding to these ideal-growing conditions with rapid growth. In some cases, the cane is so short that it could still be cultivated and not break any cane. Fortunately, this extremely short cane is only a small percentage of the industry's total crop.

As reported in last month's article the amount of Johnson grass in fields is much higher than it has been in a number of years. However, the number of these heavily infested fields does not represent a very large amount of the total acreage. As the industry has increased its percentage of older stubble, the amount of weed seed and weed pressure has increased. Because more growers are closing in ditches and consolidating fields by laser leveling, one source of weed infestation (ditch banks) is being greatly reduced.

Growers are reporting more problems with bermudagrass than in past years. Bermudagrass has always been a problem in older stubble fields, but is now becoming an increasing problem in fields of plant cane. Hopefully with good tillage weather during the summer, growers will be able to get a handle on this grass problem either by mechanical fallow plowing or through the use of a herbicide program. The key to decreasing the infestations of bermudagrass is to prevent its establishment. There are several good herbicide programs that will help to suppress bermudagrass. If you have any questions about what program is best suited for your situation contact your local county agent or your crop consultant for their advice.

Many growers have planted roundup-ready® soybeans as an additional source of income. There is an added bonus; growers are seeing great results from this practice and expect to greatly reduce both Johnson and bermudagrass pressure in the plant cane crop following their bean crop. Although many of the fields of beans were somewhat slow getting started during all of the rain and cloudy/cool weather, they are responding well to field conditions at this time. The crop of beans is not made and should be monitored very closely for insect infestations.

A field of beans can become heavily infested with stinkbugs very quickly, and in a very short time stinkbugs can cause a significant reduction in yields.

**Rust**

As Dr. Jeff Hoy predicted, there is a huge outbreak of rust throughout the industry this year. Both LCP 85-384 and HoCP 91-555 are showing very severe symptoms of rust. At the writing of this article (June 15), it was expected that the number of severely and newly infested fields would be decreasing, but that does not seem to be the reality. Rust is normally found in the more rapidly growing fields of LCP 85-384 (plant cane) but with the amount of spores floating around, symptoms are now appearing in fields of the older stubble of LCP 85-384. Because LCP 85-384 is a parent of HoCP 96-540 and L 97-128, it is to be expected that they would be somewhat susceptible to rust. HoCP 96-540 is showing some resistance to rust infection. In fields of 540 that are located next to heavily rusted fields of LCP 85-384, the further the cane is inspected from the source of rust, the less rust is found. The redness in the HoCP 96-540 diminishes rather quickly the further it gets from an outside source of infestation. On the secondary stations, some rust can be found on the leaves of L 97-128 but not nearly the amount that is observed in near by fields of LCP 85-384. This would suggest that there might be some resistance to rust in L 97-128.

Despite short stubble, heavy Johnson grass, and severe rust outbreak, most growers are now reporting that they are expecting to harvest, at the very minimum, an average crop.

**Secondary Stations**

At this time the League's agronomists, with able assistance of variety personnel from LSU and the USDA, are in the process of walking all of the secondary stations. While the secondary stations are being walked, the seed cane is checked for variety mixture and diseases (leaf scald, rust, mosaic, and smut). During this time if any mixtures are found, they are removed. Any plant that is showing symptoms of leaf scald or mosaic is removed also. The infected plants are removed either by digging out the infected stool or by spraying the infected stool with a high rate of roundup to kill it. By doing this the disease will not be spread to the rest of the seed cane.

The procedure for removing smut infected plants is somewhat different. Because smut is spread by wind and because stalks that produce smut whips are so weak that they do not normally survive planting; only the whips that are producing or about to produce spores are clipped. After clipping, the smut whips are placed in the row furrows so that the spores cannot be blown about by the wind. For a field to become infected with smut the source of the infection does not have to be right next-door. The smut spores can be picked up by the wind and carried for many miles before they fall on susceptible plants. Because of these "spore showers," smut can be found in the middle of fields that appear to have no reason to be infected.

Rust infected plants are not removed because rust is not a systemic disease and because its spores are spread from one field to another by the wind. However during the variety evaluation program, if a variety is observed to be extremely susceptible to rust it is dropped from the variety-testing program and from the seed increase program.

Both Ho 95-988 and L 97-128 were released to the industry at the May 2004 meeting of the Variety Release Committee. There is **no** seed of Ho 95-988 for distribution from the ASCL secondary stations this year. Because the variety was dropped from the testing and increase programs, there is not enough seed for distribution on the secondary stations in 2004; there should be a large amount of seed for distribution in 2005.

The application form for L 97-128 is in this month's issue of the Sugar Bulletin (page 12). So that the distribution process is more trouble-free and to assure the likelihood of getting seed from a location of your choice please fill out all requested information. There is a slight increase in the cost of the new variety this year. The price per ton of cane for L 97-128 is $41.00 per ton of cane (shucks on).

**Smut In L 97-128**

It may be the blisters from breaking in new boots. It may be the fact that the temperature has been above 90° for the last week or two. Or it may be the fact that time and age are marching on, but to this author there appears to be a lot of smut on the secondary stations in the new variety L 97-128. **While actually, the amount of smut found on the secondary stations in L 97-128 has been low.** There have been a few stations that were more infected with smut than others, but this is to be expected because of the way smut is spread by the "spore showers." All of the infection levels have been well below 1%. In an effort to reduce the inter-row spread of smut on secondary stations, they will be rogued and smut whips removed at least two times before seed of the new variety is distributed from the secondary stations. However growers should be advised that they will find some smut whips in their seed plots of L 97-128 next year.

Initial maturity tests have shown L 97-128 to be a very early, high-sucrose variety. These tests indicated that the variety is even sweeter earlier than CP 72-370. CP 72-370 was grown successfully by the industry for a number of years as a variety that could be counted on to mature early. If the early testing data for L 97-128 holds true for commercial harvest, the variety could be a very valuable addition to the list of varieties growers have to select from. Because L 97-128 produces a very tall smut whip, they (the smut whips) will be easy to spot in the fields. Because of its value as a good yielding (equal to HoCP 85-384) early high sucrose variety; growers should not be frightened off by the few smut whips they will see in their fields.


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## THE LAST DAY ON WHICH APPLICATIONS FOR SEED CANE OF L 97-128 CAN BE ACCEPTED IS AUGUST 6, 2004

The cost of the seed is $41 per ton. The Secondary Stations providing the seed will earn $40 and the League will keep $1 for each ton of cane sold. The League will make every effort to fill orders at locations selected by applicants. It is important that you fill out the application completely (first, second, and third choices) so that we might provide you with the best service.

*Tear Off Application Below and Mail*

### APPLICATION FOR L 97-128 SEED CANE

Date _____

TO: American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A., Inc. P. O. Drawer 938, Thibodaux, LA 70302-0938

Gentlemen:

I hereby apply for _____ tons of L 97-128 seed cane. I agree to pay when an allocation is assigned to me, and I am to be notified concerning this and supplied with the name and address of the grower from whom I am to get the cane, which I will send for on a specified delivery date. I understand that this cane will not be trash free.

If for any reason this order cannot be filled, it is understood that my money will be refunded to me.

My 2004 **total acreage** in cane for **sugar and seed** is _____ acres.

The locations I wish to receive my allocation from are:

1st choice _____

2nd choice _____

3rd choice _____

This application is made with the full understanding on my part that it may not be possible to get as much as I apply for, and that there is no guarantee expressed or implied that this seed is free of mixtures, diseases, insects, weeds or weed seeds.

My farm is located between these two towns: _____ and _____

**PLEASE PRINT**

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____

Zip _____

Phone # (Day) _____ (Evening) _____

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**Go 1/4 mile to Monnot Rd., turn right and travel to Dairy on left .**

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***Nextel*** **sales representative.**

# LIST OF STATIONS WHERE L 97-128 IS AVAILABLE

The American Sugar Cane League has been directed by the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to undertake a fair and impartial distribution of the newly released variety of cane known as L 97-128.

It has been grown with the understanding that those growing L 97-128 will be paid the price of mill cane plus a bonus, and the League is authorized by the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to charge a distribution fee of $1.00 per ton.

If you wish to order seed cane of this new variety, please fill out the application form found in this issue of THE SUGAR BULLETIN. **NO OTHER FORM OF APPLICATION WILL BE ACCEPTED AND IT MUST BE RECEIVED AT THE OFFICE OF THE AMERICAN SUGAR CANE LEAGUE, P. O. DRAWER 938, THIBODAUX, LA 70302, NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, AUGUST 6, 2004.**

The price of this seed cane is $41.00 per ton, cut and loaded on your vehicle at the secondary station. The cane will be cut with a mechanical harvester. There is no guarantee, expressed or implied; that the seed offered is free of mixtures, diseases, insects, weeds, or weed seeds.

For the convenience of delivering and handling L 97-128, the League is requesting purchasers to name three secondary stations from which they are willing to receive cane. The League will attempt to fill all orders from one of the three selected secondary stations. If this is not possible, the order will be filled from the nearest secondary station. If only one secondary station is named and the order cannot be filled from that station, then the order will be filled from a secondary station selected by the League.

On August 6, 2004, all seed will be allocated and there will be no switching of secondary stations.

**The secondary stations possessing L 97-128 are:**

| Parish | Station | Operator |
|---|---|---|
| Ascension | Palo Alto | Palo Alto, Inc. |
| | New Hope | Triple M Farms |
| Assumption | Belle Alliance | Cavalier Farms |
| | Cedar Grove | E.G. Robichaux |
| | Glenwood | Robert Falcon Farms |
| | Goldmine | Thibodeaux Bros. |
| | Little Texas | Tex-Emma |
| | Lula | Landry Bros. |
| | Westfield | Landry Farms |
| Avoyelles | Newton Cane Co. Inc. | Blake Newton |

| Parish | Station | Operator |
|---|---|---|
| Jefferson Davis | Diamond W Farms, Inc. | Diamond W Farms, Inc. |
| Iberia | Caroline | Herman Walet |
| | Freyou Farms | Glenn & Wayne Freyou |
| | Enterprise | M.A. Patout & Son |
| | Ronald Hebert Farms | Ronald Hebert, Jr. |
| | Square B Farms | John Edmond Broussard |
| | Ulysee Gonsoulin | Ronald Gonsoulin |
| Iberville | Bayou Goula | Alton Landry, Inc. |
| | Cannonburg | Cannonburg Plantation |
| | Frank Pearce & Sons | Frank Pearce & Sons |
| | St. Louis | St. Louis Planting |
| Lafayette | Triple V Farm | Daniel Viator |
| Lafourche | Leighton | Godfrey Knight |
| | Raceland | Ellender Farms |
| | McLeod | Big D Farms |
| Pointe Coupee | Alma | Alma Planting Co. |
| St. James | Blackberry | Blackberry Farms |
| | Graugnard Farms | Graugnard Farms |
| | Martin & Poche | Martin & Poche |
| St. John | Glendale | T. Lanaux & Sons |
| St. Martin | B & T Farms | Dane Berard |
| | Huey Dugas Farms | Huey Dugas |
| | Levert St. John | Levert St. John |
| St. Mary | Allain | Adeline Planting |
| | Bayou Cane Co., Inc. | Jessie Breaux |
| | Breaux Bros. | Herbert Breaux |
| | Champagne Farms | Mike Champagne |
| | Frank Martin Farms | Robert Judice |
| | Northside Planting Co. | Jackie, Clint, & Chad Judice |
| Terrebonne | Hope | Ellender Farms |
| | Magnolia | Daniel Naquin Farms |
| Vermillion | Edward Zenon Farm | Edward Zenon |
| | Sam Duplantis | Sam Duplantis |
| West Baton Rouge | Robert Morris Farms | Robert Morris Farms |

By James F. Coerver, P.E.
G.E.C., Inc.

# Global Warming Politics

The winter of 2004 was much colder than winters of the recent past, with near hundred below zero temperatures reported in New England. One benefit of the cold winter was a chill on the persistant discourses by environmental alarmists in the news media on the subject of global warming. When temperatures are bone-chilling cold, people are more likely to favor global warming than oppose it. Even Al Gore had a scheduled speech cancelled in early January because of severe freezing conditions in the locality. Now, with the spring warm-up and heading into the dog days of summer, global warming and other controversial issues are back on the environmentalist news media "front burners."

Warming of the global climate is a matter of some concern because, in theory at least, polar ice caps and alpine glaciers could melt, raising ocean level and flooding coastal areas where much of the world's population now resides. The planet Earth has experienced warming and chilling trends for eons, some going to extremes such as the Pleistocene epoch (ice age beginning about a million years ago) when vast ice sheets covered most of North American and Europe, and ocean water levels were much lower than now. However, naturally occurring global warming and chilling cycles of shorter duration and extremes occur much more frequently than an "ice age" or a Carboniferous "coal age" with steaming, dinosaur infested jungles.

What environmentalists now perceive as "global warming" they blame on carbon dioxide gas accumulation in the world's air envelope coming from excessive and increasing combustion of fossil fuels by the world's growing population. The favorite theory is that such carbon dioxide accumulation turns the world into a "greenhouse" that traps solar heat that would otherwise radiate away from the planet. It is on the basis of this controversial assumption that the infamous Kyoto Protocol was formed calling for developed nations of the world (except China) to reduce carbon dioxide emissions while developing nations (including China) are allowed to greatly increase such emissions. In fear of devastating economic impact, the U.S. Senate firmly rejected Kyoto Treaty participation, but environmentalists now denounce fiercely President Bush for not implementing Kyoto accord provisions as some European nations have done but are now having second thoughts about doing so. With presidential and congressional elections coming up in November, one can expect a summer and fall of much heated rhetoric on global warming in the news media.

The *Sunday Advocate* of June 6, 2004 contained an interesting article on global warming, discussing the difficulties some

European nations are having with voluntarily implementing Kyoto Protocol provisions, but expressing optimism about Russia approving the treaty and thereby obtaining the quorem needed for making protocol provisions mandatory in signatory nations. Russia, which at first rejected the Kyoto accord for economic reasons, now has abundant and growing supplies of natural gas and now may concur in order to seize the opportunity to sell more gas to European nations while using its own gas surplus to replace coal in Russian factories in order to meet Russia's quota of carbon dioxide emission reductions. Combusted natural gas has only half the carbon dioxide emissions of combusted coal on a BTU for BTU basis. No such economic opportunity exists in the U.S.A. where natural gas supply is marginal, price is much higher than coal, and environmentalists resist every attempt to increase domestic hydrocarbon production capability.

It is ironic that the June 6, 2004 *Sunday Advocate* also contained a feature article on global cooling in the Science & Technology section of the newspaper. Scientists refer to the situation as "global dimming," and it is caused by thick and growing clouds of air pollution that blocks sunlight (heat) from reaching the earth surface (and thus offsetting real or perceived "global warming"). Actually, scientists have been aware for centuries of this phenomenon. When the volcano Krakatoa erupted on August 26, 1883, so much fine dust and other volcanic pollutants reached and remained suspended in the Earth's atmosphere that average global temperatures were reduced by over 2° F, and global temperature did not return to normal until three years later. 1884 became known as the year without a summer. And do you remember the fear of "nuclear winter" during the so called Cold War? While no one I know of is advocating air pollution as a solution for global warming, the enigma does reflect on the credibility of doomsday environmentalists on the global warming issue.

The above issues are all directly related to our national energy situation, which is currently a mess because of growing dependency on unstable sources of imported petroleum. Nuclear power could reduce the need for hydrocarbon fuels and do so without producing global warming emissions, but environmentalists hate nuclear power also and investors are unwilling to face the costs and delays involved in battling environmentalists and government red tape. Over 51 percent of the nations electric power is now generated in modern coal-fired plants, but the EPA is now preparing regulations which will require these existing plants to spend an additional $50 billion in antipollution technology over the next 15 years (according to the *Wall Street Journal* of April 15, 2004). We have centuries of coal reserves in this country, but environmentalists also strongly resist any attempt to build additional coal-fired power plants. With the cost of natural gas now well above $5 per million cubic feet and domestic supplies declining, electric bills will surely soar. Meanwhile, an energy bill addressing some of these issues is bogged down in the U.S. Senate because of conflicting environmental and economic (political) interests. Most likely nothing constructive will occur before the November elections, and probably not after the elections either.

Whether or not there is a constructive change in the nation's energy policy, the proper course of action for the cane sugar industry seems quite clear. The use of natural gas at sugar factories must be practically eliminated by both heat conservation and by increasing bagasse boiler fuel efficiency. Ready markets or factory use of any surplus bagasse must be further developed to prevent long term storage and handling of bagasse from becoming a burdensome liability for the industry.

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# THE BATON ROUGE LINE

By Tom Spradley
Spradley and Spradley

## Legislature Refuses To Change Workers' Comp Law

Senate bill 672 proposed by State Senator Kip Holden (D - B.R.) would have slashed a big hole in the exclusive remedy feature of the workers' comp law by allowing lawsuits when an employee alleges that the employer removed a safety guard or device, and that an injury was caused by the lack of the safety equipment. Sounds fair. Except for the fact that an employee could merely allege the circumstances and the farmer is in court. And, except for the fact that we already have a law on the books to take care of that situation.

Trial lawyers have continually tried to find a crack in exclusive remedy defense since the no-fault workers' comp system was created years ago. The exclusive remedy workers' comp system has worked very well over the years providing prompt attention to workers' injuries and quick effective rehabilitation without the expense and time involved in litigating each situation. But it does not pay large sums to trial lawyers.

Attempts to create new "causes of action" in injured workers' situations come along on a pretty regular basis, but all attempts have fallen short. Business lobbyists know to look for renewed efforts when there is an election and significant numbers of new lawmakers. This year's effort got perilously close to passage by getting out of the original committee in the Senate and passing on the floor of the Senate. Such bills traditionally go to Committees on Labor, but when this one arrived in the House it was assigned to the Civil Law Committee, which is slightly pro-trial lawyer oriented. It passed easily in committee but finally bogged down on the floor of the House.

The League took action alerting growers in selected areas that their representative was being pressured to vote for the bill. Practically all business interests joined hands to stop the bill. The Farm Bureau and LABI played major roles in accumulating nearly 60 votes against the measure leaving the proponents with about 40 votes they could count on. It takes 53 votes to pass a bill in the House of Representatives. At this writing the bill languishes in the House on a section of the House agenda where bills often go to die and it is not expected to move. A large majority of Senators and Representatives from sugar growing areas vigorously opposed the change.

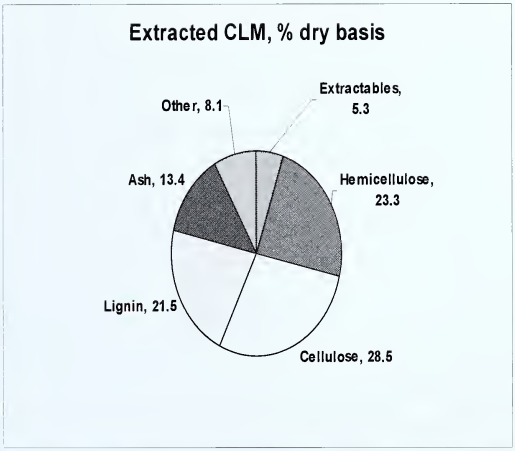
**Legislature Says No To Diesel Tax**

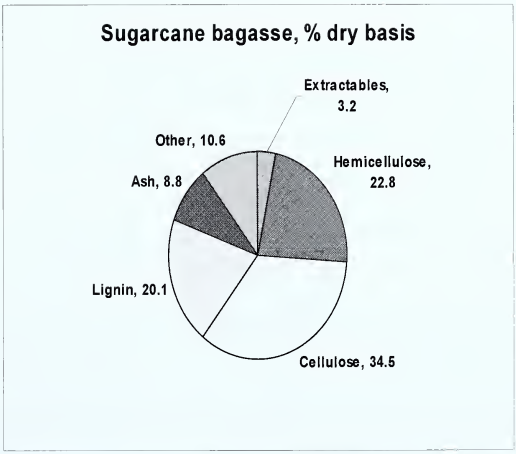
The legislature, in a protective move for farmers, passed SB 394 by Senators Barham, Cain, Marionneaux and Nevers which prohibits local governmental units from passing or collecting a sales tax, a use tax or any other tax on diesel fuel. Some local governments, feeling the same budget pinch as the state government, have laid an eye on the possibility of taxing off-road fuel which has traditionally been free of such taxes. At this writing the bill is actually hung up in conference committee ironing out wrinkles caused by an exemption from the ban for Lincoln Parish. Debate highlights that in Lincoln Parish alone a sales tax on diesel will raise $100,000. Such a tax applied statewide would be quite a hit financially for farmers and equipment owners. The wrinkle was expected to be worked out allowing the bill to finally pass.

# MILLING AROUND

By Dr. Peter Rein
Audubon Sugar Institute
Louisiana State University AgCenter

*Editor's note: In last month's article of Milling Around entitled "Sugarcane Bio-Refinery: The Future of the Sugarcane Industry," written by Dr. Michael Saska the graphs were printed incorrectly. The following graphs are a reprint to include the legends, which were missing.*




## Graduate Study at Audubon Sugar Institute

Audubon Sugar Institute has openings for high quality graduate students in mechanical, chemical or biological engineering, chemistry, or food science. A research project on a sugar processing or related field will be a requirement for the degree. Graduate assistantships are available to cover tuition and living expenses. Prospective candidates need to fulfill requirements for admission to LSU graduate school. Preference will be given to residents of Louisiana. Applications should be addressed to the head of the Institute by e-mail (prein@agctr.lsu.edu) or by fax to 225-642 8790. An EEO/affirmative action employer.

# Dedicated Research Funding Summaries

***Scientists who receive funding from the League's Dedicated Research Committee are requested to prepare a short summary of their work at the end of the year. Those reports will be published each month until all of them have been printed. The following are reports from research during the year 2003.***

**Economic Analysis of Sugarcane Production in Louisiana,** *Michael E. Salassi, Department of Agricultural Economics & Agribusiness, LSU Agricultural Center, Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station*

**Progress Report for 2003**

**Annual production costs: Projected** sugarcane production costs for 2003 were estimated at $402 per farm acre for production through harvest of third stubble. These costs include expenses for fallow field operations, seedbed preparation, planting, plantcane and stubble crop field operations and harvest. General farm overhead expenses were estimated at $71 per acre. Based on average yields in the range of 30 to 35 tons per acre, total production and overhead cost per pound of sugar produced was estimated to be $0.198 per pound for a one-fifth share arrangement and $0.190 per pound for a one-sixth share arrangement.

**2002 Louisiana Sugarcane Disaster Program:** A large amount of time during 2003 was spent helping the Louisiana Farm Service Agency (FSA) administer the 2002 Louisiana Sugarcane Disaster Program. Once a payment formula was adopted by the industry, it was realized that historical yield data, necessary to estimate percent loss in 2002, was not available at FSA. It was realized that sugar production data from mills would have to be combined with certified sugarcane acreage data from FSA for the 2002 year as well as prior base years. Given that the national FSA office in Kansas City usually calculates crop disaster payments to be paid out by FSA, it seemed difficult for them to carry out this activity in a timely manner given the large amount of data collection and verification required before any disaster payment calculations could be made. I volunteered to oversee the data collection and verification as well as determine the appropriate disaster payments on each tract of sugarcane land in the state. This work was performed over an approximate six-month period in 2003, working closely with each FSA parish office as well as every mill to collect and verify the necessary data. Sugarcane disaster payments were then determined, distributing $60 million in disaster funds to over 11,000 potential tracts of sugarcane land.

**CAFTA Trade Study:** Conducted a study on the impact of increased U.S. sugar imports in response to a request from the Louisiana Bankers Association and First South Farm Credit System to analyze the impact of the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) on raw sugar prices. Given the fact that several free trade agreements are currently being negotiated, or have plans to begin negotiation, we evaluated a range of additional U.S. sugar import levels up to 3 million metric tons. Results indicated the potential decrease in raw sugar prices for various additional import levels which could result from implementation of one or more free trade agreements. An additional import level of 100,000 metric tons was projected to lower raw sugar prices by approximately 0.72 cents per pound, while an additional import level of 500,000 metric tons was projected to lower prices by 3.4 cents per pound. Larger additional sugar import levels would lower raw sugar prices by greater amounts.

**Weed Control Research in Sugarcane Status / Results of 2003-Funded Project,** *James L. Griffin, Curtis A. Jones, Luke M. Etheredge, Jr., and Wilson E. Judice, Department of Agronomy and Environmental Management, Baton Rouge, Louisiana*

For the 2003 growing season research was conducted at the St. Gabriel Research Station and in Assumption, Lafayette, Iberia, St. James, St. Martin, St. Mary, and West Baton Rouge parishes. This report briefly summarizes highlights of the weed research program. Specific data and comments for all experiments conducted are presented in the Weed Science 2003 Annual Research Report and can be viewed at www.lsuagcenter.com/weedscience under the category "Weed Science Related Publications."

**Sugarcane Response and Weed Control with Herbicides Applied From Planting through Layby**

At 90 days after application of herbicides at planting in 2002 bermudagrass was controlled 90 to 93% with Dupont K4 (4 lb/A) and Command (3.33 or 2.67 pt/A) plus Direx and 80% with Command (3.33 pt/A) plus Spartan. Bermudagrass control was only 20 to 40% with Prowl plus Sencor, Prowl plus atrazine, Sencor alone, and Sencor plus Direx. Weed control was impressive considering that on September 25 and October 3, 2002, heavy rainfall was received from two tropical systems, Tropical Storm Isidore and Hurricane Lili.

Two studies were conducted using LCP 85-384 to evaluate injury potential with Dupont K4 (4 lb/A) compared with Direx applied in late March and with Dupont K4 applied sequentially in spring followed by a directed application at layby in late May. Sugarcane and sugar yield were not negatively affected by the herbicide treatments. Another study evaluated sugarcane injury potential with Dupont K4 (4 lb/A), Prowl plus Direx, or atrazine applied postemergence overtop in March, April, or May. For the March application maximum air temperature for the period seven days before and seven days after application ranged from 59° to 81° F with an average of 73.2°. For the April application maximum air temperature for the 15 day period ranged from 78° to 86° with an average of 82.8°. For the May application maximum air temperature for the 15 day period ranged from 83° to 92° with an average of 88.2°. Significant injury to LCP 85-384 and reduced sugarcane and sugar yield occurred only for the mid-May application of Dupont K4 and Direx. It can be concluded that the response is temperature related and if temperature at the time of application is around 85°, Dupont K4 or Direx should not be applied over the top of sugarcane.

Sugarcane was injured around 30% 21 days after Valor was applied at 8 oz/A in late March. Injury consisted of reddening of foliage and stunting. Sugarcane was able to recover from the early season injury and even when Valor was applied at layby following a previous March application sugarcane growth was not negatively affected. Entireleaf morningglory control 24 days after layby was around 94% for Valor at 4 oz/A compared with 81% for atrazine at 2 qt/A. Differences in sugarcane and sugar yield among treatments were not observed.

**In-Crop Reduced Tillage Research**

Dupont K4 was applied in March after LCP 85-384 stubble sugarcane was either off-barred or not off-barred. Differences in weed control where herbicide was banded instead of broadcasted were not observed. Soil temperature on the row top (2 inch depth) within the sugarcane drill in March and April, sugarcane shoot emergence and height, and sugarcane and sugar yield were each equal whether or not sugarcane had been off-barred. These findings suggest that in fields where rutting is not a

problem, tillage operations in the spring could be eliminated without affecting sugarcane emergence, early season tillering, or yield as long as weeds are not a limiting factor.

**Fallow Weed Research**

Bermudagrass control programs to include mechanical destruction of sugarcane stubble followed by soil applied and/or Roundup treatments were compared with a no-till system where Roundup was used to kill sugarcane stubble. At planting bermudagrass control in the no-till treatments was as good as or better than the conventional treatments, and there were no problems observed with opening of rows or in planting and covering of sugarcane. This indicates that a no-till system can be used in fallow fields to manage weeds as effectively as conventional tillage programs. In another study destruction of sugarcane stubble followed by soil applied treatments significantly delayed the reestablishment of bermudagrass. Where Dupont K4 (4 lb/A) was applied, bermudagrass ground cover was 20% compared with 80% where a soil treatment was not used. In another study where beds had large clods present at application, itchgrass was controlled 82% with Prowl plus Sencor and 78% with Prowl EC plus Spartan. Itchgrass control with 3 or 4 lb/A of Dupont K4 was approximately twice that of 2 lb/A (around 63 vs. 33%). Itchgrass control obtained with the Prowl EC formulation was equal to that of the Prowl microencapsulated formulation. Purple nutsedge control in mid-August (31 days after a soil application) was no more than 20% for Spartan and no more than 52% for Sempra. In late-September, 55 days after the postemergence application and 28 days after sugarcane was planted, nutsedge ground cover in the nontreated control averaged 53%. Purple nutsedge control was 80% or more only where Roundup WeatherMax was applied with Spartan at 6.7 and 8 oz/A or with Sempra at 1.34 oz/A. Spartan and Sempra were most effective and provided the best long term control of purple nutsedge when applied as a foliar treatment in combination with Roundup WeatherMax. Control with the combinations, however, was still no more than around 85%.

**In-Crop Johnsongrass Control Research**

Johnsongrass was controlled 34 days after treatment 33% with Asulox at 2 qt/A and 86% with Asulox at 2 qt/A plus Envoke at 0.3 oz/A. This compares with around 65% for Asulox at 4 qt/A or Envoke at 0.3 oz/A applied alone. Sugarcane injury was no more than 10% where Envoke was applied alone or with Asulox and height differences among herbicide treatments were not observed. The combination of 2 qt/A Asulox (half rate) plus Envoke provided greater johnsongrass control than 4 qt/A Asulox (full rate) applied alone. In another study, injury to LCP 85-384 following an April application of Envoke was no more than 11% and consisted of stunting and white banding on newly emerging leaves. By 43 days after application sugarcane height was not negatively affected. Sugarcane and sugar yields were equivalent for the Envoke and the standard treatments.

**Red Morningglory Control Research**

Red morningglory was controlled 91 to 96% 43 days after soil application of Spartan at 4 to 8 oz/A. Atrazine at 4 qt/A controlled morningglory 76%. For Dupont K4, 4 lb/A controlled morningglory 96% and 3 lb/A provided 88% control, but control was 59% when the rate was reduced to 2 lb/A. Sencor provided no more than 82% morningglory control. Control with Valor was 97% at 8 oz/A, 86% at 6 oz/A, and 76% at 4 oz/A.

**Harvest Aid Research**

Pitted morningglory with 3 to 4 foot runners was controlled 3 days after application in August 85 to 90% with Aim at 1, 1.5, and 2 oz/A and around 35% with ET-751 at 0.5 and 1 oz/A. In contrast,

red morningglory control was 75 to 80% with the Aim treatments and around 40% with the ET-751 treatments. Indications are that pitted morningglory may be more sensitive than red morningglory to Aim. In standing sugarcane with red morningglory as tall as the crop, weed control 13 days after a September application was 93% with 2,4-D, 73% with Aim at 1.9 oz/A, and 65% with atrazine at 3 qt/A. By 34 days after treatment red morningglory was controlled 83 to 87% with atrazine at 3 qt/A, Aim at 1.9 oz/A, and Clarity at 16 oz/A compared with 98% with 2,4-D. In contrast the ET-751 treatments and the lower rates of atrazine and Aim controlled red morningglory 33 to 55%.

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**Developing Weed Management Programs for Efficient Sugarcane Production,** *Edward P. Richard, Jr., Research Agronomist; Richard Johnson, Research Agronomist; Ryan Viator, Research Plant Physiologists; USDA-ARS, SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma*, LA

Over 25 field experiments relating to this project were conducted during the 2002/2003 growing season. Most of these studies dealt with weed control (johnsongrass, bermudagrass, itchgrass, and morningglory). Included in these experiments were evaluations of Envoke, Spartan/Authority, Command, Valor, and DuPont K4 applied alone and in combination and at various times (at planting, spring, and/or layby) during the growing season. The respective manufacturers of Envoke and Valor have petitioned EPA for a label for the use of these products in sugarcane in 2004 based in part on ARS research data. Envoke and Valor are primarily postemergence herbicides, but both have some preemergence activity. In studies conducted to date, Envoke has shown some postemergence activity on both rhizome and seedling johnsongrass and itchgrass. When applied in combination with Asulox, this mixture is especially effective in controlling mature plants of these weeds even when the rate of Asulox is reduced. The water solubility of DuPont's K4 may be of some advantage when economics is considered and when herbicides must be applied to fields containing trash blankets. Studies conducted by ARS in 2003 suggest that DuPont K4, when applied at layby, may be causing a yield reduction especially when it is applied at the 4 lb product/acre rate. As a result of this and other studies conducted in the industry, the label for DuPont K4 has been changed for 2004 to reflect a reduction in the rate applied at layby.

Studies are continuing to evaluate the impact of tillage frequency on crop and johnsongrass and bermudagrass density and the impact of weed density on chopper harvester efficiency in green and burnt cane. Results suggest that where cane is harvested green, fiber levels in the cane delivered to the mill will be increased where significant levels of either weed is present by at least 1% regardless of harvester operator attempts to optimize extractor fan speeds to eliminate the weeds from the harvested billets. Research was initiated in 2003 to evaluate the effects of combine-generated green cane residues on weed and crop growth and herbicide performance.

We also continue to conduct studies evaluating herbicides with postemergence activity on grasses (Fusilade, Arsenal, Oust, Accent, and Outrider) as possible sucrose enhancing alternatives to glyphosate (Polado) using stubble crops of LCP 85-384. For 2003, a total of 16 treatments were included in a small plot evaluation. Two herbicides, Arsenal and Oust, continue to show some promise as potential ripeners producing TRS/TC levels similar to glyphosate at 6 ounces of active ingredient/A, while producing spring shoot growth numbers that are higher than when glyphosate is applied. Additional rate and timing studies will be conducted with these materials in 2004. A study was also conducted in 2003 in a stubble crop of LCP 85-384 to compare different adjuvant containing formulations of Monsanto's and Syngenta's glyphosates applied at active ingredient rates of 4, 6, and 8 ounces/A. In this study, glyphosate produced the greatest increase (10+%) in TRS/TC levels when it was applied at 6 or 8 ounce/A regardless of formulation and whether samples were taken at 35, 42, or 49 days after treatment.

**Increasing Yields Through Variety Testing in Nurseries, Infield Trials, Outfield Trials and Specialty Studies,** *Edwis O. Dufrene, Agronomist; Donnie Garrison, Agronomist; Thomas L. Tew, Research Geneticist; Edward P. Richard, Research Leader; USDA ARS, SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA*

Six nursery trials (varieties from the 2002 and 2003 assignment series) and two infield trials (varieties from the 2002 series) were planted in 2003. Nine infield trials (with varieties from the 1996 through the 2001 series) and thirteen nursery trials (containing varieties from the 1999 through the 2002 series) were harvested in 2003. Data from these trials will be used to determine what varieties to advance for further testing and help in deciding what parents to use in the crossing program.

Three date of planting tests were harvested in 2003. These tests also looked at the effect of planting date on method of planting (billet vs. whole stalk). Although an analysis has not been completed at this time, tests in previous years have consistently shown an advantage to planting early. LCP 85-384 has generally been the least affected by date of planting.

Maturity curves for the current and soon to be released varieties were developed using a 2-week harvesting interval beginning on August 25, 2003. In addition, studies designed to look at varietal responses to the ripener, Polado, and studies designed to look at alternatives to Polado were repeated in 2003. One or two page narratives with the summarized data were developed after each sampling date and distributed to millers, growers, extension personnel, and researchers via email.

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**Insuring the Availability of Disease Resistant Sugarcane Varieties for Louisiana**, *Michael P. Grisham, Research Plant Pathologist; Yong-Bao Pan, Research Plant Molecular Geneticist; William H. White, Research Entomologist; Thomas L. Tew, Research Geneticist; John C. Veremis, Research Geneticist; Edward P. Richard, Jr., Research Agronomist; USDA-ARS, SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA*

Field trials designed to test modification to the protocols for testing varieties for resistance to smut and leaf scald indicated that the simultaneous dip inoculation for smut and leaf scald was not a satisfactory method for leaf scald inoculation. Leaf scald was successfully inoculated in the greenhouse with a pressure spray inoculation and in the field with bush hogging of spring shoots. These methods will be further tested in the field in 2004 in an attempt to find a more effective and consistent method for field inoculation of leaf scald.

Leaf samples from over 500 sugarcane plants showing mosaic symptoms were collected in 2002 and 2003 at locations throughout the Louisiana sugarcane industry. SrMV strains I, H, and M were associated with 70%, 9%, and 2% of the plants, respectively. In previous surveys conducted between 1978 and 1995, over 90% of the plants sampled were infected with SrMV strain H. The remaining 10% was mostly infected with SrMV strain I, except for an occasional sample with SrMV strain M. The emergence of a previously minor strain as the predominant strain may explain why some experimental varieties nearing the end of their 14 years of testing have appeared to become susceptible. In the 2002-2003 surveys, SrMV was identified as the virus infecting approximately 14% of the plant samples, but the strain could not be identified. We could not infect LCP 85-384 with potential new strain, but its appearance does demonstrate that the virus is still capable of change. The virus infecting about 5% of the plants could not be identified as either SrMV or sugarcane mosaic virus, the virus that caused mosaic until the 1950s, and suggests the presence of another virus capable of causing mosaic-type symptoms.

Of the recommended and near-release varieties, YLS was found only in LCP 85-384 of the late spring planted field test as a result of natural infection. Infection will continue to be monitored in the first ratoon crop during the spring and summer of 2004. A replicate of this test was planted in the fall of 2003 and will be monitored for sugarcane yellow disease infections in the plant cane crop in early spring.

Although several progeny from self-pollinated LCP 85-384 were successfully inoculated with mosaic in the greenhouse, these clones did not develop natural infections in the field. We will continue to evaluate these clones and look for others among a new population of progeny from self-pollinated LCP 85-384 that have a stronger reaction to mosaic or other diseases in search of markers that can be associated with susceptibility or resistance to important diseases affecting the Louisiana sugarcane industry.

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**Determining Sugarcane Yield and Quality Response to Rates, Timing, Method and Source of Nitrogen Fertilization,** *Chuck Kennedy, Associate Professor, Dept. of Agronomy, La. Ag. Exp. Station; William Hallmark, Professor, Iberia Research Station, La. Ag. Exp. Station; Ben Legendre, Sugarcane Specialist, Sugar Research Station, LSU Ag Center.*

Results of a multi-location outfield test to determine the optimum rate of N fertilizer for LCP 85-384 indicated the optimum rate was on the low end of present recommendations. Results of ratoon crop response to N application rates were similar to those of previous years in this large outfield study. Cane yield optimized between 80 and 100 lb N/ ac on light soils and 100 to 120 lb N/ac on heavy soils. Sugar yields were optimized at slightly lower rates. Overall, the data indicate optimal response occurs for the variety LCP85-384 at rates 20 to 40 lb N/ac less than presently recommended.

Applying a range of N fertilizer rates in early April vs late May for 3rd ratoon LCP85-384 harvested in late September resulted in a slight N rate x timing interaction for cane yield. When applied in April, cane yield from 40 lb N/ac application was less than 80 lbs and above while there were no significant differences among N application rates applied in May. Sugar yield and CRS were unaffected.

Broadcasting full or split applications of stabilized urea (Super U) (having urease and nitrification inhibitors) in early February and/or sidedressing full or split applications of regular urea in April into plots where harvest residue remained, was swept to middles, or burned resulted in interaction. Yield of 3rd ratoon LCP85-384 was generally significantly lower when grown where the harvest residue remained. However, the application of 120 lb N/ ac as Super U in February resulted in yields statistically equivalent to the check (burned residue with 120 lb N/ac applied as sidedressed urea in April ). The best yields occurred on burned residue with a split application of 60 lb N/ac as broadcast Super U followed by the same rate as sidedressed urea in April. Cane yields were 8% more than the check and sugar yields were 29% more.

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# THE SUGAR BULLETIN

**Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A.**

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# UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Jim Simon

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## Supplying the Domestic Sugar Market
## CAFTA Petition Drive

In the last twenty-five years the domestic sugar and sweetener market has undergone drastic change. Over this period of time the supply side of the market has been influenced by a number of factors, but primarily by high fructose corn syrup, and artificial sweeteners. Now we face a new supply challenger to our market in the form of imported sugar containing products.

American food processing companies continue to move their operations offshore in search of lower input and labor cost. This allows them to use cheep sugar from foreign markets in their processed food products which are then imported into the United States.

The tariff rate quotas do not apply to many imported sugar-containing products such as jams and jellies, cookies, canned fruits, and other sweetened products. Many such items are classified to tariff lines that are not subject to the tariff-rate quotas. In addition, most of the tariff-rate quotas exempt products that are imported in retail packaging for direct sales to consumers.

Prior to 1995, sugar contained in imported products was pretty much offset by sugar contained in U.S. food exports, indicating only a minor positive adjustment to total deliveries. Beginning in the 1995-96 period, sugar-containing product imports started increasing at a rate faster than U.S. sugar-containing product exports. Added sugar from net imported products has grown from 83,000 tons in 1996 to 535,000 tons in 2003. On a per capita basis, the sugar in net imported products added 3.7 pounds to total per capita sweetener availability in 2003. Sugar in imported products continues to displace domestic sugar deliveries. For the first half of the 2004 fiscal year sugar in imported products is 50,000 STRV higher than the same period in fiscal year 2003. If this trend continues the rate of growth of imported sugar-containing products will approach 20% for fiscal year 2004. This is a staggering rate of growth that is chewing up domestic deliveries of sugar in the United States.

We have called on our affiliate in Washington, the American Sugar Alliance (ASA) to help us with this issue. Several years ago consultants for ASA studied remedies for controlling the influx of sugar-containing products and point out that it will be very difficult for us to accurately account for and control these imports.

With these imports increasing at such an alarming rate we must attack this issue with all of our might and vigor. If left unchecked, this loophole in our current sugar program could decimate producers, processors, refiners and all of the other stakeholders in the United States sugar industry.

### CAFTA Petition Drive

The League is sponsoring a petition drive seeking supporters to stand with us in our opposition of the Central American Free Trade Act. In a show of solidarity, we are seeking signatures to this position. When we finalize our petition action plan, we will let you know exactly what you can do to help.

# Upcoming Dates to Remember

August 6, 2004 - Deadline for L 97-128 Seedcane Applications.
See July, 2004 issue of The Sugar Bulletin for more information.

August 7-11, 2004 - American Sugar Alliance Sweetener Symposium
Vail Marriott Mountain Resort, Vail, Colorado
Go to www.sugaralliance.org for more information.

September 23-26, 2004 - Louisiana Sugar Cane Festival and Fair
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# WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

## Appropriations - CAFTA Efforts
## USDA WASDE July Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The House agricultural appropriations package was approved by the U.S. House of Representatives in mid-July. The package maintains base funding for Houma and includes $3 million for construction of the new facility.

In the Senate, no appropriations activity has been scheduled at present and it appears that all such activity will be delayed until after the August recess. The Senate has approved its version of the Defense appropriations package and the Homeland Security package has been approved at the full Appropriations Committee level, but none of the other 11 appropriations packages have come out of subcommittee. Early indications are that the base funding for Houma is contained in the Senate agricultural appropriations package as well.

At this point, with so many appropriations bills yet to be acted upon and so few days remaining on the legislative calendar, it seems certain that Congress will eventually agree to move another omnibus bill. Most observers anticipate that there will be a continuing resolution to keep government programs in business beyond the September 30th end of the fiscal year and that Congress will return to Washington after the November elections to approve an omnibus spending bill.

**CAFTA Efforts**

President Bush has now acknowledged that the CAFTA legislation is unlikely to be considered during the current legislative session. Conversely, the Australian trade pact, which does not include sugar, was approved in mid-July. The fact that the CAFTA vote has been delayed while the Australian agreement has moved forward, despite being finalized after the CAFTA pact, is a clear indication that our efforts have shown early dividends. The addition of Senator John Edwards (D-NC) to the Democratic presidential ticket will help ensure that the CAFTA will remain a major issue in the upcoming campaign season.

Congress will be in recess for six weeks, beginning July 22 and continuing through the Labor Day weekend. As I have urged previously, this period will be an excellent opportunity to visit with Members of Congress from the sugar-producing regions to voice your concerns on issues of importance to the industry, such as CAFTA, H2B visa applications for immigrant workers, Houma funding and others.

**USDA WASDE July Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released**

The USDA released its July World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. 2003/04 beginning stocks remained at 1,661,000. Production was decreased to 8,844,000 short tons from 8,940,000 short tons last month, with beet production dropping to 4,799,000 from 4,863,000 short tons in June, and cane production falling to 4,045,000 from 4,077,000

short tons last month. Louisiana cane sugar production was unchanged at 1,458,000 short tons. Imports were increased to 1,744,000 from 1,659,000, but the lower production numbers dropped 2003/04 total supply to 12,249,000 from 12,260,000 short tons in June. Export sales were increased to 210,000 from 200,000, deliveries were unchanged at 9,860,000 short tons, and total uses increased to 10,070,000 from 10,060,000 short tons. This resulted in ending stocks of 2,179,000 from 2,200,000 short tons in June. The stocks-to-use ratio was lowered to 21.6 percent from 21.9 percent last month.

For 2004/05, total production was decreased to 8,480,000 from 8,590,000 short tons, with beet production dropping to 4,432,000 from 4,520,000 and cane production falling to 4,048,000 from 4,070,000 short tons. Louisiana production was reduced slightly to 1,562,000 from 1,575,000 short tons. Imports were unchanged at 1,591,000, reflecting TRQ imports of 1,206,000. The lower beginning stocks resulted in a decrease in total supply to 12,250,000 from 12,381,000 short tons in June. Exports increased to 200,000 from 150,000, deliveries remained at 9,905,000 and re-exports at 190,000. Total use was increased to 10,105,000 from 10,055,000 short tons, resulting in ending stocks of 2,145,000, from 2,326,000 short tons last month, and the stocks-to-use ratio was lowered to 21.2 percent from 23.1 percent in June.


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# ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

## Crop Report
## Rust - L 97-128
## Contact Committee Report

July 15,2004, for the last few days most of the cane belt has not received significant rain. At the sugarcane meeting in Bunkie yesterday a number of the growers stated that they were just finishing their lay-by sprayings. Many growers are now returning to their field work of preparing fallow fields for planting. During the six weeks or so of nearly daily rains, many of the fallow fields (those not planted in soybeans) grew up in weeds that must now be destroyed. This growth must be destroyed either by herbicide applications or by mechanical tillage. Concerned by the over abundance of weed growth in the fallow fields, not knowing when the rains would stop, and not wanting the weeds to become so advanced that they could only be controlled by another plowing; many growers used varying methods to spray their fields. The methods of herbicide applications ranged from aerial applications by planes and helicopters to the use of small ground spray rigs pulled through the fields with 4-wheelers. Growers have been very resourceful in their solutions for getting into fields during these saturated conditions. Of course, once rows are drawn and the closer it gets to planting season, it becomes even more important that fallow fields are as clean as possible. It is always a good practice to follow as closely behind the covering of planted cane as possible with a pre-emergence herbicide. This is a must in fields where growers were unable to keep johnsongrass and other weeds under control during the wet conditions.

**Rust**

As cane has continued to grow, most severe rust infestations have disappeared. On closer observation, many of the new leaves are speckled with rust, but are not producing spores. This is normal for this stage of growth. Many growers are questioning how severely yields will be reduced due to the rust infestation. At this time, there is no data available that can be used to predict the yield losses from rust. However, data will be collected during this year's harvest and this data should lead to a method that can be used to predict yield losses associated with severe rust infestations. As mentioned in other articles, Dr.'s Clayton Hollier and Jeff Hoy have ongoing tests that should give reliable information on potential losses from rust. They will follow up this year's tests with other tests in following years. During the first week of July this author, Herman Waguespack and Dr. Hoy had an opportunity to visit the rust test in Iberia parish. The field was too wet and the rain and lightening were too close to permit a very close observation, but from the back of the pick up truck, there were very visible differences. The check plots (plots with rust) were shorter than the treated plots (plots sprayed with a mixture of fungicides). Again looking at the test from the outside, there appeared to be about a twelve

to sixteen inch difference in heights between the treatments. Whether this will translate into significant yield difference is not known at this time. The plots will be combine-harvested and the cane will be loaded into one of the weigh wagons for yield determination.

**L 97-128**

On the secondary stations, the League's agronomists are continuing to remove smut from the seed increases of L97-128. The percentage of infestation still remains low, with a few hotspots within some of the seed plots. No matter the source of the L 97-128 seed cane, a grower should expect to see some smut whips in his seed plots of the new variety. There are a large number of requests for the new variety and growers are reminded that the cut off date for acceptance of applications for purchase of the new variety is **Friday, August 6, 2004.**

**Contact Committee Report**

The chairman of the Contact Committee Lawrence "Boo" Levert expresses a sincere thank you to all who participated in the June 30th meeting of the committee. He offers his thanks to those who were on the program and to those who were in the audience.

Following the meeting there were a number of requests for abstracts of talks given at the meeting. None of the participants had prepared written material for the meeting, but several agreed to prepare a written report for publication in the Sugar Bulletin. In his article *Milling Around* found on pages 15 – 19 of this month's Bulletin, Dr. Peter Rein summarizes his Contact Committee presentation; *What does it cost the Louisiana sugar industry to process trashy cane and are there any methods to reduce these loses*?

A summary written by Dr. Ryan Viator of his talk entitled *Can High Quality Cane be Delivered to the Mill Economically* is included in this article. Additionally Dr. Mike Salassi has written a summary (*Potential Cost Savings for the Louisiana Sugar Industry*) of his presentation and it also is included in this article. As others complete their summaries, they will be published.

## Can High Quality Cane be Delivered to the Mill Economically?

*Ryan Viator, Edward Richard, Jr., Blaine Viator,*
*Windell Jackson, Herman Waguespack, and Harold Birkett*

Cane quality is becoming increasingly important to the Louisiana sugarcane industry, with some processors offering premiums for high quality cane. This research was conducted by the USDA-ARS-SRRC Sugarcane Research Unit, American Sugarcane League, Calvin Viator and Associates, LSU Ag. Center Audubon Institute, and grower Mike Waguespack to determine if clean cane can be delivered economically to the mill. Using a Cameco® 3500, we tested ground speeds of 2.5, 3.0, and 3.5 mph and fan speeds of 650, 850, and 1050 rpm. Each fan speed was tested at each ground speed to determine if extractor speed needed to be adjusted depending on how fast the chopper was traveling i.e. the amount of cane throughput. Four 150-ft sections of partially lodged LCP85-384 were cut at each of these settings. Cane was weighed in a billet wagon equipped with load cells, and a random sample of 6 to 8 inch billets was collected as it entered the wagon using a sampler that moves back and forth across the top of the wagon. Three square yards of plant material were collected from the row tops in each plot to determine the sugar content of the material being blown to the ground by the extractor fans. Billet samples were analyzed the same day at the USDA Ardoyne Sucrose Lab using the prebreaker/ press methodology. A bagasse analysis was also conducted on the collected trash to determine the sugar content.

Ground speed had no effect on cane yield or quality, regardless of the fan speed. Fan speeds, though, had a dramatic affect on all parameters measured. Cane tonnage was reduced to 37.0 tons per acre for the 1050 rpm setting compared to 42.7 and 44.0 for the 850 and 650 settings. In other

words, the 1050 setting was leaving an additional 5.7 to 7.0 tons per acre (13 to 16% more) of plant material in the field, but this additional material contained only about 100 lbs sugar per acre indicating that the fan at 1050 rpm is removing leafy trash and not much cane. Furthermore, TRS for the 1050 setting was 240 compared to 220 and 210 for the 850 and 650 fan speed settings based on the new formula currently used in the industry. Cane yield and TRS balanced each other out in terms of sugar yield, with none of the treatments being significantly different as sugar yields ranged from 8500 to 9000 lbs per acre.

An economic analysis was then conducted on this yield data based on LSU 2004 Projected Costs and Returns (Breaux and Salassi, 2004). The 1050 setting produced $28 and $40 more per acre than the 850 and 650 rpm setting under a custom-haul scenario. Under a direct-haul scenario, the 1050 setting produced $12 and $20 more per acre compared to the 850 and 650 setting. Basically at higher fan speeds, harvesting costs are reduced dramatically; it eliminates the added cost of harvesting an extra five to seven tons that has little sugar value.

If we take a step back and look at the big picture of grinding season, we can see some other advantages to delivering high quality cane. In this study, the 1050 fan speed reduced cane tonnage by 13% compared to the 850 setting while making more money per acre. Therefore, if high quality cane was delivered consistently to the mills, we could shorten a 100-day grinding season by 13 days. This could allow the industry to start grinding on October 1 instead of September 15. One must remember that 35% of cane growth occurs during the grinding season, and that TRS values increase also as the season progresses. By starting grinding two weeks later, tonnage and sucrose levels would be improved for the entire crop.

The optimal fan setting of 1050 in this study may not be a consistent optimal setting. Optimal fan speed will change with cane tonnage and condition, levels of soil and cane moisture, and with the type and condition of the harvester used. The objective of this study was not to determine the exact extractor fan settings for chopper harvesters but to determine if clean cane can be delivered to the mill economically. This study demonstrated that in order to maximize industry profits in chopper-harvested green cane some stalk material will be left behind. The goal of future research is to provide growers a simple way to assess what is an acceptable loss behind the harvester, so that combine operators have a way to calibrate their machines to optimize cleaning regardless of the combine model, cane tonnage, or harvesting conditions.

Breaux, Janis B., and Michael E. Salassi, *Projected Costs and Returns - Sugarcane, Louisiana, 2004*, Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness, Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station, LSU Agricultural Center, A.E.A. Information Series No. 220, January 2004.

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## Potential Cost Saving Areas for the Louisiana Sugar Industry

*Michael E. Salassi*
*LSU Agricultural Center*

In order to remain a viable industry well into the future, the Louisiana sugar industry must constantly evaluate its operations, and make changes or improvements when necessary, to ensure that it is producing raw sugar as efficiently and economically as possible. This is true at both the producer and processor level. This article presents some thoughts regarding potential areas of cost savings

for Louisiana sugarcane producers and processors. This information was originally presented at the League's Contact Committee Meeting in Thibodaux on June 30, 2004.

The production process for converting sugarcane to raw sugar can be thought of as a series of production phases. These phases could be segmented into: (1) planting, (2) cultivation, (3) harvest, (4) hauling, (5) processing, and (6) marketing. In terms of industry economic returns, all of these phases are related and connected to each other. Actions in any one phase can affect economic returns for the whole industry. Certainly, in the production and processing of sugarcane in Louisiana, there are areas where significant progress has been made in improving production and economic efficiency. Two areas where some further potential cost savings may exist are in the areas of harvesting and hauling sugarcane.

Recently, there has been much discussion about whether some type of group harvesting operation would work in the sugarcane industry in Louisiana. Most people would probably agree that large scale group harvesting of sugarcane, similar to what is being done in Florida or Texas, would probably not work well in Louisiana, primarily due to the comparatively large number of mills and growers in the state. However, there may exist some opportunities for cost savings from group harvesting on a limited basis. Small groups of growers in very localized areas may be able to reduce harvest costs by sharing the use of a combine.

Growers incur two types of costs when using combines to harvest sugarcane. Operating or variable costs include expenses such as fuel, labor and repairs. The total value of these operating costs increases as harvested acreage increases. However, combine operating costs per ton of cane harvested remain relatively constant and do not change as acreage increases. Ownership or fixed costs include the costs of owning the combine and include primarily depreciation and interest costs. Total annual combine ownership costs are fixed. As a result, ownership costs per ton of cane harvested can be decreased by using the combine over more acres. Fixed ownership combine costs are the expenses which are being decreased by group harvesting efforts.

A simple example can illustrate this point. Suppose the annual fixed ownership cost of a combine is $42,000 per year. This cost can be computed as the total annual depreciation and interest cost or it can be computed as a capital recovery charge (i.e., the annual payment which will recover the capital lost through depreciation, plus interest on the unrecovered amount). Using a 32-ton average yield, the fixed cost of the combine would be $4.38 per ton of cane harvested on 300 acres, $2.19 per ton of cane harvested on 600 acres and $1.46 per ton of cane harvested on 900 acres.

In the hauling of sugarcane, one area of potential cost savings may exist in the type of hauling system used. There is currently a great deal of interest in the bin hauling system. These bins can be detached from the trailer and can hold approximately the same amount of cane as one standard trailer. One truck and trailer unit can handle as much as 15 or so bins, resulting in a significant reduction in the number of trucks and trailers required. Harvest and transport efficiency is improved with this type of hauling system. Harvester operations are not dependent on truck availability and loaded bins can be hauled to mills on an as needed basis, day or night. Recent experience with the bin hauling system has shown significant costs savings in trailer tires and brakes as well as the number of trucks and trailers required.

Another area of potential cost savings related to the hauling of sugarcane to mills is the timeliness of the delivery of harvested cane. A study was conducted to simulate the delivery of harvested sugarcane to a mill under alternative delivery schedules. These schedules corresponded to the hours during which the mill would accept delivery of cane. Three schedules were simulated: 12-hour, 18-hour, and 24-hour. Time from harvest to delivery at the mill was analyzed for three time periods: 1 hour, 3 hours and 6 hours. A simulation model was developed to simulate delivery and grinding of harvested sugarcane over one 24-hour period. Truck delivery of sugarcane over the day was simulated, as was the time period from delivery to the mill until grinding. Based on these values, dextran levels, price penalties, sugar losses from dextran formation, and daily economic losses from dextran were simulated.

Results from this simulated study indicated that cost savings are possible from the delivery of fresher cane by extending delivery hours or by adjusting time of harvest during the day to minimize the time period between harvest and grinding. Expansion of cane delivery hours can reduce this time period, resulting in significant reduction in economic losses. The majority of these economic losses or costs are price penalties associated with dextran.

**Simulated sugarcane hourly time period between harvest and grinding, net price reductions, and mean daily economic losses**

| Farm to mill time (hours) | Mill hours (hours of cane delivery) 12-hour 6:00am–6:00pm | 18-hour 3:00am–9:00pm | 24-hour 6:00am–6:00am |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Hours from harvest to grinding[1] | | |
| 1 hour | 8.6 | 3.7 | 2.0 |
| 3 hours | 10.6 | 5.7 | 4.0 |
| 6 hours | 13.6 | 8.7 | 7.0 |
| | Net price reduction (cents / lb) @ 20 cent / lb price | | |
| 1 hour | 0.560 | 0.280 | 0.097 |
| 3 hours | 0.749 | 0.406 | 0.155 |
| 6 hours | 1.080 | 0.639 | 0.276 |
| | Mean daily economic losses @ 10,000 tons / day | | |
| 1 hour | $11,200 | $5,600 | $1,940 |
| 3 hours | $14,980 | $8,120 | $3,100 |
| 6 hours | $21,600 | $12,780 | $5,520 |

[1] Mean time period from cane arrival at mill to grinding was 7.6 hours for the 12-hour schedule, 2.7 hours for the 18-hour schedule, and 1.0 hour for the 24-hour schedule.

In summary, two areas of sugarcane production and processing which may provide potential cost savings with improvement in efficiency are in the harvesting and hauling of sugarcane from the farm to the mill. Group harvesting could offer savings in harvester ownership costs per ton of cane harvested. Large scale group harvesting, as is done in Florida or Texas, is probably not feasible in Louisiana. However, group harvesting efforts would probably be possible in Louisiana on a limited basis with a relatively small number of growers in close proximity to each other. Improved efficiency in hauling sugarcane offers some potential cost savings. The use of an unloadable bin type system is currently being evaluated by mills in the state. This type of hauling system does seem to offer real cost savings. Further work needs to be done to address the question of whether a single hauling system or some combination of hauling systems is most economical for the industry. And finally, efforts by growers and mills to adjust harvest and delivery of cane to the mill does seem to offer opportunities to improve processed cane quality and reduce price penalties and economic losses to the industry. If the Louisiana sugar industry is to remain viable and strong economically over the long run, all phases of the industry must be operating as efficiently and economically as possible.

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# MILLING AROUND

By Dr. Peter Rein
Audubon Sugar Institute
Louisiana State University AgCenter

## What does it cost the Louisiana industry to process trashy cane and are there any methods to reduce these losses?

A considerable amount of work has gone into looking at how the operation of the harvester affects the amount of trash delivered to the mill. We need to know how trash impacts the milling operation so that the effect on combined farming and processing costs and recovery of sugar can be predicted. This paper summarizes the information presented to the League Contact Committee meeting at the end of June 2004.

**Quantity and quality of trash in cane**

As a starting point, we need to know the quantity and quality of the trash and then calculate what its effect might be. A considerable amount of work has been done in different industries around the world, as they have also grappled with this subject. In Louisiana, Legendre et al. (1999) report trash and tops content of green cane varying between 10 and 17% on cane, depending on extractor fan speed. With burnt cane, the numbers are slightly lower, varying from 8 to 11%. Hand cut and topped burnt cane had a lower trash content of 6% on cane.

The composition of tops and trash has also been measured by a number of different groups in other cane growing areas (Scott 1977, Scott et al. 1978, Ivin and Doyle 1989, Birkett 1965). At Audubon Sugar Institute, tops and trash has been analyzed over the last few years in an attempt to characterize the material for research aimed at extracting more value from the trash. These results show a high fiber content and that the juice contained in the trash is of low purity. This data is useful in predicting the effect on the composition of cane containing various amounts of trashy material.

**Effect of green cane harvesting**

Less trash is evident with burnt cane than green cane. It is of interest to consider the effects of green cane harvesting on the processor. The advantages are:

- Cane is fresher when it reaches the mill and has a lower dextran and impurity content.
- It degrades more slowly in storage
- In bad weather, there is more flexibility in choosing fields to harvest
- It leads to more fuel or more biomass, which can be an advantage or disadvantage depending on the situation of the mill.

There are a number of disadvantages however:

- There is more material to process
- The higher fiber content means that there is a greater loss of sugar in bagasse
- More molasses is produced as a result of the lower purity and a higher loss of sugar in molasses results
- The sugar color is affected
- There is more starch in the juice because of the higher starch content of the trash
- Milling costs depend on cane crushed and revenue depends on sugar produced; trash inflates the former and reduces the latter.

The negative effects listed here are all those to be expected with trashy cane. It is expected with the trend to less burning of cane prior to

harvesting that trash content will increase, unless a conscious effort is made to reduce it.

**Elements dictating the value of cane delivered to mill**

The way in which trashy cane affects processing needs to be understood. The current payment scheme takes into account the recoverability of cane, but that is only one of three components that have a material effect on processing. These three components are:

1. *Recovery.*
   The recoverable sugar content of cane is adequately measured by the TRS formula in use in Louisiana. As the purity and fiber content of the cane changes, this formula reflects the change in sugar recovery to be expected. This statement is true except for the case of high dextran in cane. This is not accounted for in the TRS formula and significantly reduces recovery. This however is not necessarily affected by trash in cane.
2. *Cost of processing the cane.*
   Processing costs are dictated by the tons of cane processed. If the mill has to process more cane (because of the trash content) to produce the same amount of sugar, milling costs will go up proportionately. Generally trashy cane has associated with it more field dirt. Excessive soil in cane affects the cost of maintenance, leads to increased loss of sugar, reduces the output of the boilers and leads to higher usage of supplementary fuels. In Australia it is estimated that annual maintenance costs attributable to soil in cane average US $1.4 million per year for each Australian factory (Purchase and de Beer, 1999). This represents on average 0.38 US cents/lb sugar.
3. *Effect on capacity of the mill.*
   In designing a sugar mill, the fiber content of the cane or the total amount of fiber to be handled determines the extraction plant size; the total sucrose input determines the sizing of the high grade pan station; and the nonsucrose input into the mill sets the capacity of the low grade pan and centrifugal station. Changes in cane quality are generally reflected in the changes in fiber and nonsucrose in the cane. Cane with excessive trash will increase both these inputs significantly. Deterioration of one of these cane quality parameters can lead to a situation where one part of the factory becomes a bottleneck while there is surplus capacity elsewhere in the factory.

**Case study on clean vs. dirty cane**

Work was undertaken in Australia to compare the effect of clean and trashy cane on the whole operation of harvesting, transport, and processing (Kent 2003, Kent 2003a). The effect on harvesting and crushing rate is shown in Table 1 and the effect on juice quality in Table 2.

Based on the data obtained from these and other experiments, the financial consequences of the effect of trash in cane were calculated. These are summarized in Table 3. Numbers are given in Australian dollars, currently about 0.72 times the US dollar.

Harvesting is done by contract harvester in Australia and paid per ton of cane harvested. The situation is somewhat different here in that efforts to reduce trash in cane could lead to increased harvesting costs. It can be seen that both producer and processor benefit from the lower trash content in cane. The value of the increased sugar recovered would be much higher here, because the Australian income is based on world market prices.

**Table 1.** Results from an investigation into the effect of trash in cane (Kent et al. 2003)

| | Trash % cane | Bin weight (t) | Crush rate (t/h) | Fiber rate (t/h) | Recov. sugar (CCS%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Dirty** | 12.7 | 7.3 | 306 | 46.7 | 12.8 |
| **Clean** | 5.9 | 8.6 | 351 | 45.7 | 14.0 |

**Table 2.** Effect of trash on juice quality (Kent et al. 2003).

| | Purity | Reducing Sugars (% solids) | Ash (% solids) | Color (IU) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Dirty** | 89.9 | 4.0 | 2.7 | 15,400 |
| **Clean** | 91.5 | 3.6 | 2.2 | 11,800 |

**Table 3.** Economics of trash reduction at Mossman - 1.3 M ton/yr (Kent et al. 2003a). Numbers represent Australian $1000.

| | Grower | Harvester | Miller | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sugar production cost | | | 413 | 413 |
| Transport cost | | | 53 | 53 |
| Sugar & molasses income | | | 154 | 154 |
| Harvest payment | 245 | -245 | | |
| Cane payment | 264 | | -264 | |
| Total | 509 | -245 | 356 | 620 |
| Harvest margin available | | -620 | | -620 |

**Value of reduced trash in cane for Louisiana**

In the first instance the reduction in season length can be calculated. It has been reported that a reduction of 1% trash increases the grinding rate by 3% (Scott 1977). If we assume a mill crushes 1 million tons at 10,000 ton/day, a reduction of 1% reduces the crop to 990,000 tons and the crushing rate increases to 10,300 ton/day. Based on these figures, the season length becomes 990,000/10,300 = 96.1 days. The improvement in cane quality can be calculated from values reported in the literature. In total, a reduction of just 1% in the trash content of cane will lead to the following results:

- A reduced length of season, shortened by 4 days.
- An increased juice purity of 0.3 units
- A reduction in the cane fiber content of 0.4 units
- An increase in extraction and improved recovery – the TRS formula indicates an additional 4lb sugar / t cane.
- Mill costs will be reduced through crushing less cane, since costs are directly dependent on the mass of cane crushed.
- Less wear should be experienced in the plant.

This provides the basis for calculating the cost benefits in processing cleaner cane. They are expected to be significant.

**What can be done?**

There are a number of options for capturing the benefits of reduced trash in cane, but there are no easy solutions.

1. *Remove the trash at the mill.*

   It has been shown that most of the trash can be relatively easily removed from cane at the mill by blowing the trash out of the cane. A project undertaken as part of an LSU mechanical engineering student design course reported some results at the ASSCT meeting in 2002. They showed that cane trash could be readily removed by blowing air through the cane as it dropped from one conveyor onto another. The results are shown in Figure 1. The interesting feature was that the separation was achieved with virtually no loss of billets, but the problem of how to dispose

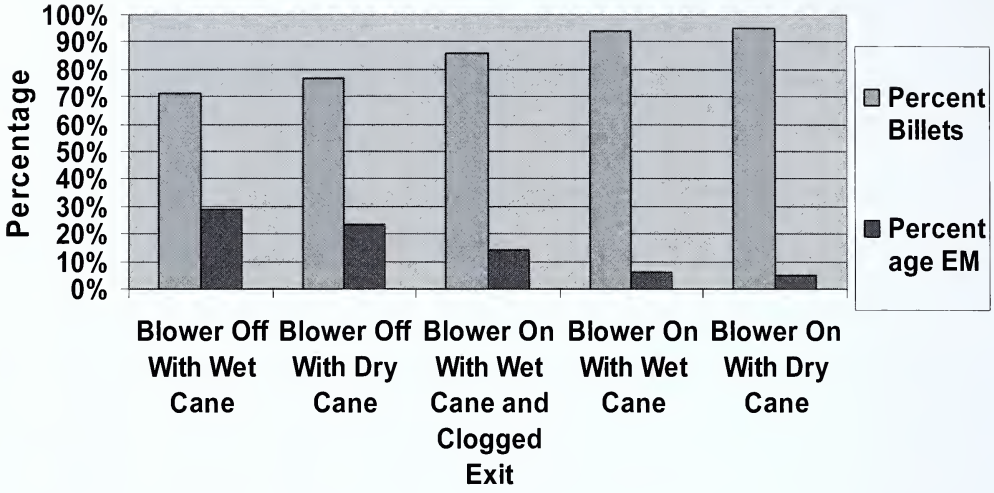


**Figure 1**. Extraneous matter (EM) removal by blowing at Enterprise mill, 2002.

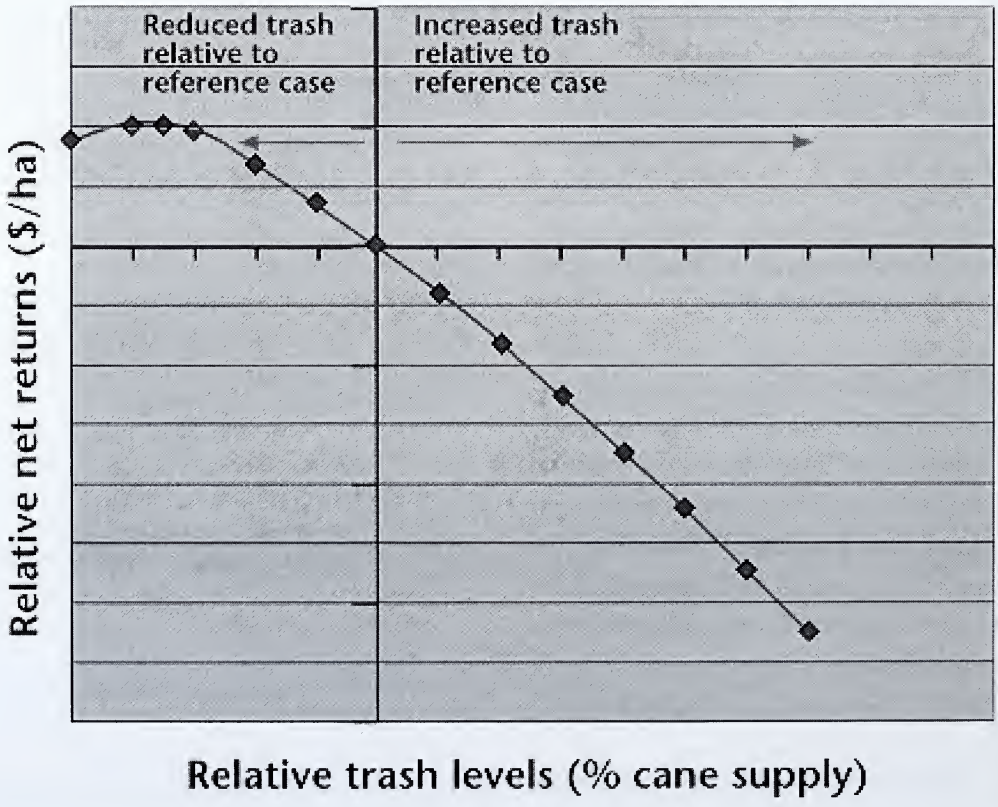
Reduced trash relative to reference case
Increased trash relative to reference case
Relative net returns ($/ha)
Relative trash levels (% cane supply)

**Figure 2.** Typical predicted trend for effects of trash (as harvester pour rates vary) on the net returns to the industry as a whole (ref. SRI Ann. Rept. 1998).

of the enormous bulk of trash that rapidly built up at the mill was insoluble.

2. *Provide incentives to make it worthwhile to handle trash in the fields.*
   Leaving the trash in the fields leads to increased costs for the grower. Financial incentives would be necessary in the form of additional payments to the growers for clean cane. This should come from the increased revenue which accrues as a result. This could mean that some additional measurements would be necessary to measure cane quality.
3. *To account for the effect on processor costs and capacity, make payment for cane related to tons cane processed.*
   The system for payment should encourage cane with a high TRS content to be produced. The cost savings in processing the cane should be used to provide the incentive for clean cane. Since processor costs depend on tons cane crushed, this should reduce the overall cost of sugar produced.

The business of growing and processing cane should be considered as a single business and decisions on what to do should be taken on what is good for the whole industry. Such a study by the two research institutes in Australia, the SRI and the BSES, was undertaken jointly in 1998. A model was developed in which all major costs associated with the presence of trash in the cane supply were evaluated to determine the effect on whole-of-industry returns. They found an optimum return at a low level of trash in cane; the results are shown schematically in Figure 2. The model indicated that "a reduction in harvester pour rate will reduce the level of trash in the cane supply and produce an increase in net returns for the industry as a whole."

The optimum level of trash is likely to be somewhat different in different areas, depending on cost structures. It is likely that the optimum for Louisiana is at a level of trash below that which is currently experienced.

**Conclusions**

In order to maximize the profitability of the industry, the business of growing and processing cane should be considered as a single business entity. The effect of the amount of trash in cane should be established for the combined operation of growing and milling and the optimum for the industry established. This is equivalent to finding the trash level that gives the maximum returns for the system represented in Figure 2. Once the optimum is established, the change in costs of growers and processors at the optimum needs to be established. If necessary, the split of proceeds should be revised to reward both grower and processor equitably.

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By James F. Coerver, P.E.
G.E.C., Inc.

# EPA Says Louisiana In Compliance With New Fine-Particle Standard

On June 28, 2004, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) notified Governor Blanco that the entire state of Louisiana is, at this time, "in-attainment of the Fine-Particle ($PM_{2.5}$) National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS). This determination is based on three years of testing for this pollutant at 64 federal reference air quality monitoring sites scattered throughout the state. The dire "health hazard" described as existing by environmentalists when the Clinton EPA promulgated this controversial new air quality standard in July 1997, simply does not exist here in Louisiana and apparently does not exist in at least 28 other states of the Union also found to be fully "in-attainment." It is now quite obvious that the many thousands of American lives allegedly to be saved by the very costly implementation and enforcement of the new $PM_{2.5}$ standard is what knowledgeable experts said it was at the time – hogwash!

The official proclamation of $PM_{2.5}$ compliance is obviously good news for every Louisiana resident, and especially good news for the sugar cane industry. Had Louisiana not been found to be "in attainment," the state would be obligated by the Federal Clean Air Act to submit a State Implementation Plan (SIP) for reducing $PM_{2.5}$ emissions sufficiently to bring the state into full compliance with that standard within a short period of time (usually about three years from the date of SIP approval by EPA). A determination of "non-compliance" would have been especially bad news as explained below.

Once EPA approves a SIP, its provisions become federally enforceable (mandatory). Ordinarily, a SIP requires that known emission sources reduce target emissions sufficiently so that such reduced emissions will, when added to naturally occurring (background) pollutants, all in accord with EPA-approved mathematical (theoretical) models, demonstrate statewide compliance with the NAAQS. Preparing SIPs for $PM_{2.5}$ compliance is especially difficult because very little is known about $PM_{2.5}$ amounts actually emitted at point sources and almost nothing is known about amounts emitted from diffuse sources such as deliberate agricultural and forestry burns. The reason so little is known is that testing for $PM_{2.5}$ is very expensive to perform, and unlike the old "PM" parameter cannot be accurately evaluated by appearance (smoke readings) because significant $PM_{2.5}$ emission levels are mostly invisible. States required to submit an SIP will have little alternative but to attack all visible PM emissions, assuming (inaccurately) that $PM_{2.5}$ emissions are a predictable component (percentage-wise) of visible (PM) emissions. For instance, cane fields and bagasse boilers in a "non-attainment" state could be required to reduce existing visible emissions, and how such could be accomplished or even measured is unknown. Environmentalists would simply insist that all such visible sources must therefore be "eliminated."

It is fortunate that the Louisiana smoke management program (for sugar cane harvesting) was in place and operating during this period,

and demonstrated that proper burn management can prevent nuisance levels of smoke. However, as long as it remains necessary to burn cane fields, visible emissions (smoke) will occur, and if there is not 100 percent plan participation and compliance with the state's management plan there will be problems defending smoke complaints whether or not legitimate.

Twenty-one states and the District of Columbia are in "non-attainment" of the $PM_{2.5}$ NAAQS. Most of the non-attainment occurs in an area contained by a line drawn from New Haven, Connecticut to Kenosha, Wisconsin to St. Louis, Missouri to Birmingham, Alabama to Macon, Georgia and back to New Haven. West of the St. Louis metro area, the only reported non-compliance is in one county in Montana, the San Joaquin Valley of California, and the Los Angeles-San Diego area. $PM_{2.5}$ problems in the densely populated area eastward of St. Louis appear to be related to coal and fuel oil combustion and the operation of internal combustion engines. Over 51 percent of the nation's electric power is generated in coal-fired power plants and most of these plants are located in the eastern $PM_{2.5}$ problem areas. Air pollution problems in the California areas are legendary and involve regulated pollutants besides $PM_{2.5}$, but I am not aware of the problem caused in Montana, if one actually exists there.

EPA recently proposed a rule that purports to greatly reduce emissions from existing coal-fired power plants (including fine particles) and more severely limit emission from new coal-fired plants. The EPA has already promulgated new standards for diesel fuel which will eventually eliminate that fine particle problem. Environmentalists have been severely critical of both rules, but implementation of these rules should eliminate much of the eastern non-compliance and aid these states in SIP development.

California has already done about everything that can be done to control pollution. It will certainly be interesting to see that state's SIP for attainment of the new $PM_{2.5}$ NAAQS.

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By Tom Spradley
Spradley and Spradley

## Wrap Up - What They Did And Didn't Do

**Budget**

- The state has a new $17.5 billion budget and a $4.3 billion construction budget. Most of the construction budget won't get spent since the money isn't actually available.
- An attempt to save money by reducing the retirement costs for state employees by making them work to an older retirement age failed. Governor Blanco vetoed a bill that boosted the retirement benefits for state employees who work for the legislature.

**Commerce**

- Teenagers will be able to work later. Teens taking part-time jobs will be able to work later on school nights - midnight for 17 year olds and 11:00 p.m. for 16 year olds.
- A Constitutional Amendment will be offered this fall, which creates a special fund to aid dairy farmers. You won't pay for it directly. The money comes from licensing trademarks advertised on milk products.
- Lawmakers turned down a bill which would have increased the minimum wage to $1 above the federal minimum wage.
- Companies, which provide insurance to businesses, got permission to raise rates within a narrow range without getting approval from the Insurance Rating Commission.
- A law was passed which merged the State and Federal "Do Not Call" lists which limits telephone solicitations.
- Starting now the State will require that all gift certificates will have a 5-year expiration date and will prohibit retailers from adding service fees to the cost of the certificate.

**Driving**

- It is now against the law to drive in the left lane if you are going the same speed as the vehicle on your right.
- Motorcyclists will now have to wear helmets.
- The law now prohibits open alcohol containers for passengers, as well as for the driver of a vehicle. There are exceptions for limos, boogie busses and other commercial vehicles.
- Pornography has been outlawed in automobiles.

**Crime**

- People who have been improperly imprisoned will be able to get free job training, medical care, education and counseling.
- A bill was killed which would have allowed the permanent imprisonment of violent sexual predators. Strong testimony was given which indicates that sexual predators are difficult or impossible to cure, but it was difficult to protect the rights of those who could be cured so the bill was defeated.
- Unfortunately our state won national coverage of a bill, which failed, that would have outlawed low riding pants which revealed the top of ones 'derriere'.
- Hog-dog rodeos are illegal - but not the Uncle Earl Hog-Dog Spectacular in Winn Parish.
- Cockfighting remains legal.

**Gambling**

- It is now against the law to possess, use or make fake poker chips or slugs. It's hard to believe this wasn't already illegal.
- A law failed, which would have allowed cruise ships to open their gaming operations on the Mississippi as soon as they leave the dock.

**Education**

- Louisiana teachers will get a one percent raise.
- "Tops" was fully funded.
- Vouchers were killed.
- A Something-Less-Than- Diploma bill passed, but the Governor vetoed it.

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# Dedicated Research Funding Summaries

***Scientists who receive funding from the League's Dedicated Research Committee are requested to prepare a short summary of their work at the end of the year. Those reports will be published each month until all of them have been printed. The following are reports from research during the year 2003.***

**Sugarcane Pathology Research,** *J. W. Hoy, Department of Plant Pathology and Crop Physiology, LSU AgCenter*

During 2003, major research projects were billet planting and ratoon stunting disease (RSD) testing. Additional projects were screening for resistance to leaf scald, smut, and mosaic as part of the Variety Selection Program; operation of a local quarantine for healthy plant material to be used for tissue culture seedcane production; assessment of the threat posed by yellow leaf virus; and comparisons of the microbial communities in "new" and "old" cane ground.

Billet planting experiments were conducted at the Sugar Research Station. They included plant cane, first and second stubble experiments comparing billet date or rate of planting for LCP 85-384 and a first stubble experiment comparing billet and whole stalk planting in HoCP 85-845 and HoCP 91-555. Yield differences were detected in the plant cane date of planting test. Planting dates were August 13 and 27, September 13, and October 18. The highest yield was obtained from the mid-August date, and the lowest yield was obtained from the October date. This result was similar to what was observed in late plantings in the industry. No differences in yield were detected in the date of planting experiment in plant cane last season, and no differences occurred in first stubble. There were no early or late planting dates in this experiment. A lower yield was found for the early August planting date in the plant cane year of the experiment now in second stubble, but no differences in yield were detected in first or second stubble. In the rate of planting studies, yields have been consistently lower at the lowest planting rates (one or three running billets in the furrow) in plant cane, and typically, the reduction has been more pronounced for the mid-September versus mid-August planting date. In addition, the highest planting rate (12 running billets) has not provided additional yield. HoCP 85-845 and HoCP 91-555 had comparable yields in billet and whole stalk plantings in plant cane. No significant difference in yield was found in first stubble, but as with LCP 85-384, the highest yields are obtained with whole stalk planting.

RSD testing was conducted by the Sugarcane Disease Detection Lab for the eighth year during 2004. Kleentek seedcane production was monitored at all levels, and no RSD was detected. RSD also was not detected in the Variety Selection and Release programs. A total of 12,426 samples were tested for RSD. This is the highest level of testing achieved to date. In on-farm testing, 8,830 stalks from 443 fields on 78 farms were tested. Complete results are not yet available. However, an effort was made to sample more old stubble and more fields per farm, and the frequency of farms with some RSD detected climbed back up to 32%. An experiment comparing rates of spread of RSD caused by combine and whole stalk harvesters in commercial and experimental varieties was harvested for the third time. The results again revealed large differences in rates of RSD spread among varieties and suggested that combine harvesting does not spread RSD any faster than soldier harvesting.

Research is assessing the threat posed by sugarcane yellow leaf virus. The total number of samples tested for the virus was 11,543. Kleentek seedcane sources were monitored (1,619 samples tested), and very little virus was detected. Second stubble yields were obtained from a LCP 85-384 yield loss experiment (with M. Grisham), and yield loss results were collected from first stubble of an

experiment with LCP 85-384 and Ho 95-988. The results are still being determined. Yellow leaf spread and increase experiments have been conducted for two years (with C. McAllister and T. Reagan), and a follow-up of a state-wide survey was conducted. The 2002 results from 42 fields indicated that the disease occurs in all areas of the state, but no area has more disease than another. The highest field level of infection was 63%; however, virus was not detected in approximately half of the fields tested. In the follow-up survey of 17 fields, none of eight fields with no disease during 2002 had become infected, and the disease only increased in five of nine diseased fields. The average infection level within the diseased fields sampled was 10% during 2003. This represented an average increase in infection of 45% from 2002.

Sugarcane is often grown as a monoculture in Louisiana, and root diseases can build-up and reduce yields. Communities of microorganisms in "new" and "old" sugarcane land were evaluated at three sites to determine what changes take place during long-term cultivation of cane. Differences were detected between new and old ground sites at each location.

Screening for resistance to leaf scald, smut, and mosaic was conducted as part of the Variety Selection Program. Rust resistance evaluation was not possible due to low natural infection levels. Resistance levels in experimental varieties to smut and leaf scald were determined in inoculated tests.

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**Site-Specific Management of Louisiana Sugarcane Production Systems,** *Richard M. Johnson, Research Agronomist, Edward P. Richard, Jr., Supervisory Research Agronomist, USDA-ARS, SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA*

In 2001, 2002, and 2003 sugarcane yield variability was evaluated in fields planted to LCP 85-384 on Rebecca Plantation (Plant, 1st, and 2nd Stubble) and Gralyn Farms (4th, 5th and 6th stubble). At Rebecca Plantation, significant variability was observed in cane yield, with tonnage varying from 16 to 60 T/A in 2001, 14 to 61 T/A in 2002 and 24 to 50 T/A in 2003. Sugar yield varied from 2,360 to 13,000 lbs/A in 2001, 2,600 to 13,800 lbs/A in 2002 and 4,600 to 12,700 lbs/A in 2003. At Gralyn Farms, tonnage varied from 14 to 51 T/A in 2001, 13 to 39 T/A in 2002, and from 11 to 41 T/A in 2003. Sugar yield also showed significant variability varying from 2,680 to 11,100 lbs/A in 2001, 2,340 to 7,320 lbs/A in 2002 and from 1,950 to 8,100 lbs/A in 2003. All soil properties, at both locations, were spatially dependant. At Rebecca Plantation in 2001, 2002, and 2003, all sugar yield and quality parameters were spatially dependant with the exception of TRS and Fiber in 2003. The ranges of spatial dependence varied from 26 to 187 m. At Gralyn Farms in 2001, 2002, and 2003, all sugar properties were spatially dependant with ranges varying from 27 to 133 m. Correlation analysis was performed to study the relation between soil properties and sugar parameters. At Rebecca Plantation, the soil Ca:Mg ratio and soil S were correlated to all sugar parameters and at Gralyn Farms, soil OM, and soil pH were correlated to all sugar parameters

Three large producer fields in Schriever and Plaquemine, Louisiana were mapped in 2002 and 2003 to study this potential value of VR application methods. The fields were soil sampled using conventional and grid sampling techniques. For the conventional method, samples were a composite from random locations within the field. For the grid method soils were sampled on a 1-acre grid to maximize accuracy. In all cases, fertilizer and lime requirements were calculated and application maps were prepared. The field in Plaquemine was 30 acres in size and was located on St. Louis Plantation. The soil pH ranged from 5.1 to 6.4 and the recommended lime rate ranged from 0 to 2 tons per acre. On the 49-acre site in Schriever on Naquin Farms, the soil pH ranged from 4.9 to 6.4

and the lime rate from 0 to 2 tons per acre. Finally, on Ellendale Plantation in Schriever a 26-acre field was mapped, where the pH ranged from 5.0 to 7.2 and the lime rate from 0 to 3.25 tons per acre. For each field grid sampling significantly reduced the number of acres requiring lime compared to random sampling. Three treatments were investigated in all tests: 1) Conventional (non-variable) lime 2) VR lime, and 3) No lime. Plots were 14 rows wide and 1500 feet long at Naquin Farms and St. Louis Planting and were applied using an Ag-Chem Terri-Gator in cooperation with G & H seed company, Crowley, Louisiana. At Ellendale Plantation plots were 7 rows wide and 500 feet long and were applied using a recently purchased Newton-Crouch VR fertilizer/lime applicator equipped with a Mid-Tech variable rate controller and Trimble GPS unit. The field at Naquin Farms was harvested on December 20th in 2002 and on December 17th in 2003 using a chopper and weigh wagon. Results from the 2002 plant cane crop demonstrated an advantage to both VR and conventional lime application methods as compared to the no-lime control. However, the conventional application method also resulted in sugar and tonnage yield that were significantly greater than the VR method. Similar results were obtained in 2003 at Naquin farms with the following exceptions. The VR lime treatment yielded a significantly higher TRS than the conventional or no-lime treatments and the difference between the conventional and VR treatments decreased significantly to just under 400 pounds of sugar per acre. Results from the 2003 plant cane crop in Plaquemine harvested on December 5th did not show a significant response from lime application in cane tonnage, TRS or sugar per acre. Results from the study at Ellendale plantation will not be available until 2004. These combined results indicate that further research on the VR application method is required to maximize yields. The VR method is attempting to target only those areas within the field that will respond positively to lime application. It is possible that this procedure is being influenced by the soil testing method used to generate the lime recommendation. Research in the current proposal will address these issues.

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**Sugarcane Yield, Nutrient-Uptake, and Soil Quality Response to Post-harvest Residue Management,** *Charles Kennedy, Associate Professor, Dept. of Agronomy, LSU AgCenter, Ken Gravois, Coordinator, St. Gabriel Res. Stn., LSU AgCenter, Brandon Grigg, Soil Scientist, USDA, ARS, MSA Soil and Water Research, Baton Rouge, LA, Ed Richard, Research Leader, USDA, ARS, MSA Sugarcane Research, Houma, LA, Richard Johnson, Research Agronomist, USDA, ARS, MSA Sugarcane Research, Houma, LA*

With an average of 4 T of residue/ac remaining on the field in the spring, we did not find a significant reduction in residue from Jan. 2003 to March 2003 nor differences in remaining residue for plots amended with UAN, stabilized urea, or molasses compared to the untreated check. Alternatively, cane and sugar yield of 2nd ratoon LCP85-384 following burning the previous harvest's residue was not significantly different than any other residue management program which included leaving the residue undisturbed and untreated, treating with 60 lb N/ac as UAN, 60 lb N/ac as stabilized urea (having urease and nitrification inhibitors), treating with 1 g/ac molasses, incorporating the residue, sweeping the residue off the beds, and removing the residue from the field without burning . Yield ranged from 25.5 to 28.2 T/ac., whole-stalk sample CRS ranged from 161.5 to 176.8 lbs/T and Lbs sugar/ac. ranged from 4288 to 4764. Plots where residue was treated with N during the winter had lower to significantly lower cane yields than plots where residue was removed by sweeping from the bed, but there were no statistical differences among treatments for sugar yields.

Stalk population, however, was lower for management programs that left the crop stubble covered.

Stalk population averaged about 40,000 millable stalks/ac. by August. Plots where residue was removed had about 26% more stalks than plots where residue was treated or left undisturbed. Nutrient concentration of early-season shoots was not consistently affected by residue management. The differences that did occur were not considered biologically significant. Soil temperature at ~3.5 inches deep in the cane bed of second stubble LCP85-384 was only moderately affected by residue management. When average daily air temperature (ADAT) was below 50, leaving the residue mat resulted in slightly warmer average daily soil temperature (ADST). When ADAT was above 50 F, ADST became increasingly higher for treatments that removed the residue from the cane bed. The differences in ADST between treatments during winter were relatively small, amounting to only 1-2 F / day on average. Analysis of soil quality factors after the harvest of the 2nd ratoon crop indicated that leaving the residue on the surface over the past 3 years did not make a marked improvement in any parameter measured on this soil type. Soil organic matter averaged about 2.0% among treatments and was not affected by leaving the residue on. Base cations and CEC were improved by leaving the crop residue, but were generally adequate among all treatments. Water stable aggregates averaged 77.6% soil dry weight and was not different among treatments. Soil bulk density was lower when residue was incorporated or treated with UAN and highest when residue was left untreated. In the latter case, volumetric moisture content and water filled pore space % (WFPSP) tended to be higher during the winter of 2004. Lower surface temperatures and/or higher WFPSP were reasons soil respiration, a measure of biological degradation activity, was not higher under the residue mat than in treatments where soils were bare. When soil respiration was adjusted to an equivalent soil temperature and WFPSP for each treatment, it was higher under the residue mat, but this did not reflect the actual field conditions. These results give some indication of the factors limiting the possibility for the residue mat to decompose during the winter months in south Louisiana.

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**Isolation of a Cell Wall Acid Invertase Gene from Sugarcane**, *Sarah E. Lingle, Plant Physiologist, USDA-ARS-SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, New Orleans, John Veremis, Research Geneticist, Thomas Tew, Research Geneticist, USDA-ARS-SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma*

We have successfully "cloned" and sequenced part of the cell wall invertase gene that is turned on (expressed) in sugarcane stalks. Based on the sequences of cell wall invertase genes from maize we designed primers to amplify parts of four different genes in sugarcane. We were successful in amplifying and sequencing parts of two genes. We showed that one of these genes was turned on (expressed) in stalks of sugarcane. We attempted to amplify the entire coding sequence of the gene (cDNA), but were unsuccessful. Invertase genes are high in the bases guanine (G) and cytosine (C). These bases bind very tightly together, so it is difficult to use PCR to amplify them. We have started on another approach to get the gene sequence. Clemson University Genomics Institute (CUGI) has a bacterial artificial chromosome (BAC) library for sugarcane. These are a set of nylon filters, each about 14 inches square, on which has been spotted bacteria containing large pieces of sugarcane genomic DNA. We "labeled" a copy of the sugarcane cell wall invertase gene that is expressed in sugarcane stalks, and incubated it with each of the filters. The labeled copies stick on the filter where there is a similar sequence spotted. We then obtained the bacteria from which those positive spots came, which we hope contain the cell wall invertase gene. We are now in the process of breaking that large DNA into smaller sections, and making more of each of those sections so we can sequence them. In October 2003 we sampled stalk sections from seven diverse genotypes: Muntok Java (MJ; a *Saccharum* species hybrid), PIN 84-1 (PIN; *Saccharum spontaneum*), and five progeny of the PIN x MJ cross. This plant material is being stored at -80°C pending enzyme, sugar and RNA extraction and assay.

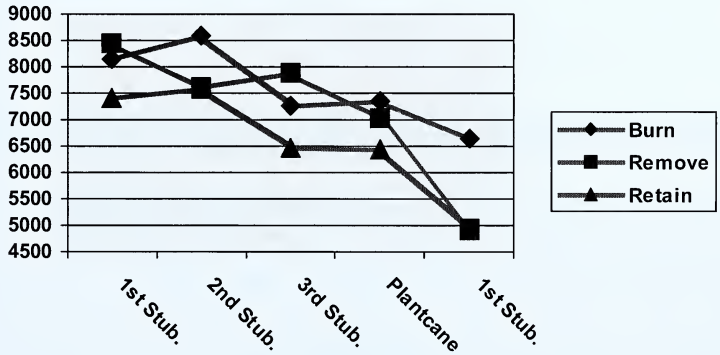
**Summary of Breeding and Management Research with Sugarcane at the Iberia Research Station,** *Howard P. Viator, Iberia Research Station, Kenneth Gravois, Sugar Research Station*

LSU AgCenter and USDA Breeding Nurseries

Experimental clones were evaluated in eight LSU AgCenter and eight USDA breeding nurseries and "infield" tests located within the Bayou Teche Region. Each of these tests contain up to 100 clones, replicated twice. Selections from these nurseries are advanced to the statewide outfield testing program. Outstanding clones are also useful as parents in the recurrent selection program.

Long-term Combine-trash Study

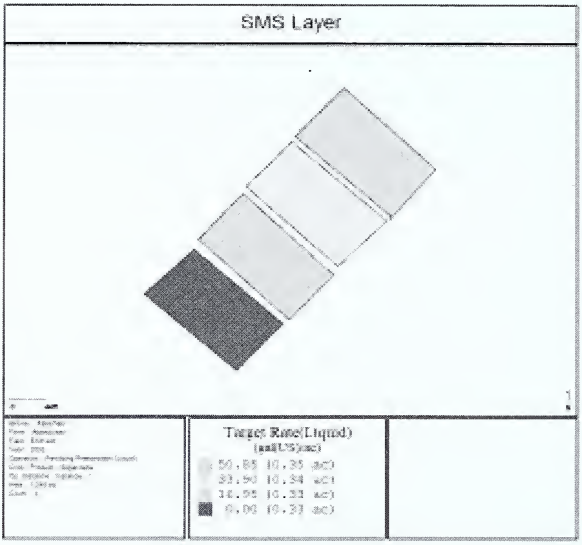
First stubble of the second cane cycle of a long-term study of the effects of combine-trash management was harvested in 2003. Of particular interest are the changes in soil fertility over time and the effects of residue management on successive crop cycles (plant cane through third stubble). Cycle two first stubble yields were 31.5, 25.8 and 25.6 tons of cane/acre for the standing burn, physical trash removal and full trash retention treatments, respectively. Though these means are not statistically different for this harvest, their ranking is consistent with treatment effects for the previous harvests (averages of all crops in both cycles for the three treatments are 39.2, 37.9 and 35.5 tons of cane/acre (P=.05), respectively). Soil samples taken during the fallow period between the two production cycles revealed numerically higher levels of soil nitrogen and carbon where combine residue was retained and not burned. Sugar per acre trend lines below clearly show that retained residue consistently lowers productivity.




**Summary of Evaluation of Precision Ag Technologies for Use in Sugarcane,** *Howard P. Viator, Iberia Research Station, Kenneth Gravois, Sugar Research Station*

Variable rate equipment for applying liquid fertilizer and chemicals was acquired, including an AgLeader Precision Farming processor, a Rawson variable rate hydraulic controller, and a John Blue variable rate pump (a Trimble AgGPS 132 was already available). Previously, several large fields (Simon and Luke farms in St. Mary and other farms in Iberia) had been geo-referenced and sampled for soil attributes such as nutrient content, pH, soil texture and CEC. We were prevented from applying fertilizer on a field at Joel Luke's farm in 2003 because the field was mistakenly fertilized. Without access to the Luke field we proceeded to evaluate variable rate technology by writing a N prescription for fall fertilization of a field on the Iberia Research Station. The prescription

shown below was applied using the newly acquired equipment capable of variably applying liquid fertilizer.




At the request of Ouachita Fertilizer Co. we assisted in the calibration of ultrasound-based yield monitors installed on two combines. Initial calibration weighing accuracy was within 5%, but consistency was not achieved over the length of the harvest season. Improvements to the ultrasound monitor are scheduled for next year.

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# EFFECIENCY OF DIFFERENT GLYPHOSATE FORMULATIONS AND ALTERNATIVE RIPENERS IN ENHANCING SUGAR YIELD IN LOUISIANA SUGARCANE DURING THE 2003 CROP

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*Editor's Note: Please note that only the summary of this article is being printed along with the tables. A full copy of this paper can be obtained from the American Sugar Cane League office or from Dr. Legendre at the LSU Ag Center.*

In the first of two field experiments, there was no apparent residual effect of Polado® (Monsanto) at 0.1875 lb ae/A (6 oz/A), Arsenal® (BASF) at 0.143 and 0.214 lb ai/A and Fusilade® (Syngenta) at 0.0625 and 0.875 lb ai/A on millable stalks per acre or TRS/TC (Table 1). These results suggest that all treatments, with the possible exception of Arsenal at 0.214 lb-rate, can be applied repeatedly over years to the stubble crops of LCP 85-384 without a detrimental residual effect on the subsequent stubble crop.

In the second experiment, 18 ripener treatments were applied on August 26, 2003, in water at a broadcast rate of 8 gal/A with a $CO_2$ sprayer and hand-held boom: a nonionic surfactant, Induce® (Helena) (0.25% v/v), was added to all spray solutions for those treatments not loaded with their own surfactant to the fourth-stubble crop of the variety LCP 85-384. The 18 treatments included: Arsenal at 0.143 lb ai/A (8 oz/A), MON 78270 (Monsanto) at 0.125, 0.1875, 0.25 and 0.3125 lb ae/A (equivalent to 3.56, 5.34, 7.12 and 8.90 oz/A, respectively), MON 78754 (Monsanto) at 0.125, 0.1875 and 0.25 lb ae/A (equivalent to 4.325, 6.487 and 8.650 oz/A, respectively), Polado at 0.125, 0.1875, 0.25 and 0.3125 lb ae/A (equivalent to 4, 6, 8 and 10 oz/A, respectively), Polado at 0.1875 lb ae/A (6 oz/A) mixed with Takeup® at 1 pt/A, Touchdown HiTECH® (Syngenta) at 0.125, 0.1875, 0.25 and 0.3125 lb ae/A (equivalent to 3.2, 4.8, 6.4 and 8.0 oz/A, respectively) and an untreated check serving as control.

This study showed that glyphosate and Arsenal are effective in increasing the yield of theoretical recoverable sugar per ton of cane (TRS/TC) and sugar per acre (TRS/A) at the rates tested for the variety LCP 85-384 at 35 and 49 days after treatment (DAT), although it appears that little or no benefit is obtained by exceeding the glyphosate rate of 0.1875 lb ae/A (equivalent to 6 oz/A-rate of Polado) (Tables 2 & 3). Because of the apparent impact of glyphosate and Arsenal on mean stalk weight (MSW) and yield of cane per acre (TC/A), it appears that a greater response in TRS/A occurs at 35 DAT although the efficacy of Arsenal in improving TRS/TC is greater at 49 DAT when compared

to 35 DAT. However, the rates for both glyphosate and Arsenal will, undoubtedly, change depending upon variety. The data showed that the 0.125 lb ae/A rate of glyphosate (equivalent to 4 oz/A-rate of Polado) will significantly improve TRS/TC for LCP 85-384; however, the 0.1875 lb ae/A-rate is significantly more efficient in increasing TRS/TC when compared to control. These data support the previous recommendations that glyphosate, regardless of formulation tested, be applied at 0.1875 lb ae/A for optimal results in improving both TRS/TC and TRS/A. Arsenal, although not as effective as glyphosate in increasing TRS/TC and TRS/A, is still an effective ripener and currently the only compound that offers new chemistry to compete with glyphosate as a proven chemical ripener under the prevailing conditions found in Louisiana. Although the use of a surfactant is optional with some products, it appears that response can be improved with the addition of a surfactant. No improvement in efficacy of glyphosate was noted for a second year with the addition of Takeup. To improve the probability of success in increasing TRS/A, sugarcane treated with a chemical ripener should be harvested within 35 to 49 DAT.

The only labeled and recommended glyphosate product included in the 2003 studies was Polado. Although Touchdown iQ® (Syngenta) is also currently labeled and recommended for commercial use in Louisiana, it was not included in these studies. Instead, the Touchdown HiTECH formulation of glyphosate was included to compare its efficacy to that of Polado. Both Polado and Touchdown HiTECH contain no surfactants or additives; therefore, these products allow the user the flexibility to customize the amount of high-quality non-ionic (NIS) surfactant added.

We acknowledge the assistance of Luke Etheredge, Curtis Jones and Gert Hawkins for their assistance in making this study possible. This research was supported in part by a grant from the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A.

**Table 1**. Regrowth potential of LCP 85-384 in the third-stubble crop following the application of various chemical ripener treatments for two consecutive years in the first- and second-stubble crops and harvested by combine at the Sugar Research Station, St. Gabriel, La., during the 2003 crop[1,2].

| Treatment | Sugar/A (lbs) | Cane/A (tons) | Sugar/T (lbs) | Stalk weight (lbs) | Millable stalks (no./A) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Arsenal(0.143 lb ai/A) | 6797 AB | 28.4 A | 239 A | 1.57 AB | 36406 A |
| Arsenal(0.214 lb ai/A) | 6136 B | 26.0 A | 239 A | 1.50 B | 35409 A |
| Control | 7006 AB | 29.7 A | 237 A | 1.73 A | 34764 A |
| Fusilade(0.0625 lb ai/A) | 6886 AB | 29.5 A | 233 A | 1.69 AB | 35094 A |
| Fusilade(0.0875 lb ai/A) | 7344 A | 30.0 A | 244 A | 1.66 AB | 36121 A |
| Polado(0.1875 lb ae/A) | 6519 AB | 28.1 A | 232 A | 1.64 AB | 34548 A |

[1]Harvested on November 7, 2003. Treatments were applied to the same plots for two consecutive years, on August 23, 2001, and on August 21, 2002. Plots were harvested at 49 days after treatment (DAT) in both 2001 and 2002.

[2]Means followed by the same letter are non-significant at the 0.05 P.

**Table 2.** Response of LCP 85-384 to various chemical ripener treatments harvested at 35 days after treatment (DAT) at the Sugar Research Station, St. Gabriel, La., during 2003 crop year[1].

| Treatment | Sugar/A (lbs) | Cane/A (tons) | Sugar/T (lbs) | Stalk weight (lbs) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Arsenal (8 oz/A) | 5691 | 24.4 | 234 + | 1.22 |
| Control | 4578 | 26.7 | 171 | 1.33 |
| MON 78270 (3.56 oz/A) | 6601 + | 26.7 | 248 + | 1.33 |
| MON 78270 (5.34 oz/A) | 5264 | 22.2 - | 235 + | 1.11 - |
| MON 78270 (7.12 oz/A) | 6363 + | 25.4 | 250 + | 1.27 |
| MON 78270 (8.90 oz/A) | 6073 + | 23.7 | 256 + | 1.19 |
| MON 78754 (4.325 oz/A) | 5300 | 22.2 - | 240 + | 1.11 - |
| MON 78754 (6.487 oz/A) | 6123 + | 24.6 | 249 + | 1.23 |
| MON 78754 (8.650 oz/A) | 6326 + | 24.8 | 255 + | 1.24 |
| Polado (4 oz/A) | 5382 | 24.7 | 218 + | 1.23 |
| Polado (6 oz/A) | 5981 + | 25.0 | 238 + | 1.25 |
| Polado (8 oz/A) | 6894 + | 27.4 | 252 + | 1.37 |
| Polado (10 oz/A) | 5988 + | 24.4 | 245 + | 1.22 |
| Polado (6 oz/A)+Takeup (1 pt/A) | 6446 + | 27.2 | 236 + | 1.36 |
| Touchdown (3.2 oz/A) | 6238 + | 26.6 | 234 + | 1.33 |
| Touchdown (4.8 oz/A) | 6422 + | 24.9 | 259 + | 1.24 |
| Touchdown (6.4 oz/A) | 7374 + | 28.3 | 260 + | 1.42 |
| Touchdown (8.0 oz/A) | 6437 + | 25.3 | 254 + | 1.27 |
| LSD (P=0.05) | 1162 | 3.9 | 16 | 0.20 |

[1]Treatments applied on August 26, 2003; plots harvested on September 30 (35 DAT). Cane/A is based on estimated yield (mean stalk weight by a constant stalk population of 40,000/A). (+) or (-) denotes yield or stalk weight which is statistically higher or lower than control, respectively.


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**Table 3.** Response of LCP 85-384 to various chemical ripener treatments harvested at 49 days after treatment (DAT) at the Sugar Research Station, St. Gabriel, La, during 2003 crop year[1].

| Treatment | Sugar/A (lbs) | | Cane/A (tons) | Sugar/T (lbs) | | Stalk weight (lbs) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Arsenal (8 oz/A) | 6559 | | 25.4 | 258 | + | 1.27 |
| Control | 6318 | | 29.8 | 212 | | 1.49 |
| MON 78270 (3.56 oz/A) | 6693 | | 25.4 | 263 | + | 1.27 |
| MON 78270 (5.34 oz/A) | 6710 | | 24.5 | 274 | + | 1.23 |
| MON 78270 (7.12 oz/A) | 7353 | | 27.0 | 272 | + | 1.35 |
| MON 78270 (8.90 oz/A) | 6633 | | 24.5 | 271 | + | 1.23 |
| MON 78754 (4.325 oz/A) | 7463 | | 27.5 | 272 | + | 1.37 |
| MON 78754 (6.487 oz/A) | 7833 | | 28.6 | 273 | + | 1.43 |
| MON 78754 (8.650 oz/A) | 6950 | | 25.8 | 269 | + | 1.29 |
| Polado (4 oz/A) | 5865 | | 24.4 | 241 | + | 1.22 |
| Polado (6 oz/A) | 6957 | | 27.3 | 255 | + | 1.36 |
| Polado (8 oz/A) | 7905 | + | 29.7 | 267 | + | 1.48 |
| Polado (10 oz/A) | 7333 | | 26.8 | 274 | + | 1.34 |
| Polado (6 oz/A)+Takeup (1 pt/A) | 7173 | | 28.6 | 251 | + | 1.43 |
| Touchdown (3.2 oz/A) | 8015 | + | 31.1 | 257 | + | 1.56 |
| Touchdown (4.8 oz/A) | 7266 | | 26.8 | 270 | + | 1.34 |
| Touchdown (6.4 oz/A) | 7295 | | 26.6 | 274 | + | 1.33 |
| Touchdown (8.0 oz/A) | 6806 | | 24.9 | 273 | + | 1.25 |
| LSD (P=0.05) | 1581 | | 5.5 | 13 | | 0.28 |

[1]Treatments applied on August 26, 2003; plots harvested on October 14 (49 DAT). Cane/A is based on estimated yield (mean stalk weight by a constant stalk population of 40,000/A). (+) or (-) denotes yield or stalk weight which is statistically higher or lower than control, respectively.

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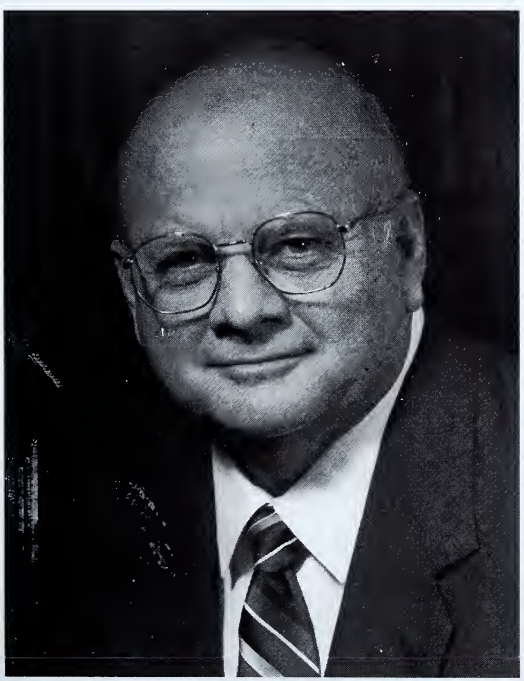

## *Robert Judice, Jr.*

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# Robert "Bobby" Judice, Jr.
# King Sucrose LXIII

The Louisiana Sugar Cane Festival and Fair Association announced that Mr. Robert "Bobby" Judice, Jr. of Centerville will reign as King Sucrose LXIII over the annual festival. This year's festival will be held in New Iberia, September 23-26, 2004.

Bobby Judice is a fourth generation sugarcane farmer. He is president of Frank Martin Farms, a 2000 acre farm operated by him and his partner, Mike Robichaux. He is a graduate of Centerville High School.

Bobby serves on the American Sugar Cane League Board of Directors, St. Mary Parish Farm Bureau Board of Directors and the Teche Federal Savings Bank Board of Directors. He is a member of the Louisiana Landmarks Society and the Civil War Round Table. He is a member of the Franklin Carnival Club and was king of the krewe in 1996. He is also a member of St. Joseph Catholic Church and Knights of Columbus.

He has received the Outstanding Young Farmer award from the Franklin Jaycees and both F.F.A. and 4-H alumni awards. He was a charter member of the original Louisiana Young Farmer and Rancher Committee and was a member of the Louisiana Farm Bureau Board of Directors. He served on the St. John-Hanson school board for 11 years. Bobby has also served as the Sugar Cane Festival Director from St. Mary Parish for over 20 years.

Bobby is married to Carolyn Viator Judice and is the father of five and proud Papa of seven grandchildren. He is the son of Robert and Mattie Judice.

The American Sugar Cane League congratulates Bobby on being selected King Sucrose LXIII.

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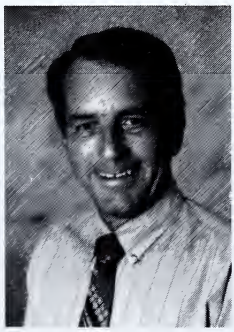

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By Jim Simon

## Why Sacrifice our State to CAFTA?

Recently, ambassadors from some Central American countries have been seen in Louisiana stumping for the Central American Free Trade Agreement. That they have ventured outside of Washington's diplomatic cocoon in an effort to salvage support for this proposal says a lot about how good it would be for their countries.

Unfortunately, what's good for tiny Central American nations doesn't work out quite so well for the people of Louisiana. The sugar industry represents a huge share of our state's economy. The total value of the sugar cane crop here is more than twice that of the next closest crop, cotton. The direct economic value of the industry to Louisiana approaches $2 billion and supports the employment of some 27,000 workers.

CAFTA would likely doom sugar producers and refiners in America in general, and this state in particular, to the role of a distressed industry. With this risk, granting preferential trade treatment to a handful of countries with the approximate economic impact of Cleveland is simply absurd.

The countries standing to benefit from CAFTA don't even stand with our country in times of need. Nations like Honduras and the Dominican Republic refused to demonstrate solidarity for America's efforts in the war on terror in Iraq, abandoning us when we needed full international support.

But that rift doesn't stop them from approaching our country with their hands out looking for new business at the expense of American companies and workers. The ambassadors from the Central American companies have recruited some of our fellow Americans in an effort to bolster their efforts by attempting to reassure the people of Louisiana that CAFTA will be all right for them. That simply isn't true. Decimating jobs and industries in the United States may be good for the Central American ambassadors, but it is decidedly bad for our workers and our economy. That's why a number of groups — including the AFL-CIO, National Family Farm Coalition, and others — have begun to stand up to the powerful interests backing CAFTA.

Flooding the market with sugar produced and refined in countries without the wages, environmental standards and worker safeguards enjoyed in America will artificially depress sugar prices. In fact, a study by several professors at Louisiana State University found that "Large increases in sugar imports into the U.S. sugar market would drive the wholesale refined beet price and the raw sugar price, the prices received by growers, down to levels below production costs."

It doesn't take a Ph.D. in economics to understand that this will drive out farms that have been cultivating these crops for up to three centuries and eliminate jobs for workers who know nothing else.

The facts for policy makers are clear. CAFTA concentrates benefits in the hands of fair weather friends in Central American governments at the expense of America's workers and economy. It fails to include safeguards to ensure foreign agricultural behemoths compete on a level playing field with our companies and their employees.

In short, CAFTA threatens to refine the sugar industry in the United States, and especially here in Louisiana, into oblivion. Our representatives in Congress must reject this proposed agreement as unfair to our workers and unnecessarily generous to a handful of people in tiny Central American countries that do not share our economic and environmental values.

*(The above is a reprint of an opinion published in the July 17, 2004 Times Picayune.)*

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# WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

## Mile-High View Of Sugar Trade Prospects
## An Appropriations Sprint
## USDA WASDE August Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The 21st International Sugar Symposium in Vail, Colorado in mid-August was the most informative session I can recall, with an outstanding list of speakers covering virtually all of the issues and problems confronting the US industry and the global sugar market. On the domestic front, there was much discussion of the Overall Allotment Quantity (OAQ) announced in mid-July by USDA, with various private and public-sector analysts questioning the wisdom of setting the OAQ at the 8.1 million short tons level announced on July 16. It is regrettable that Undersecretary J.B. Penn was unwilling to listen to the analyses prior to the symposium, but we can hope that the Undersecretary will review the decision in the coming weeks and opt to reserve a portion of the OAQ until market conditions are more settled, as was done a year ago and has been recommended in recent weeks by the industry and many congressional leaders from around the country.

Not surprisingly, opposition to the Central American Free Trade Act (CAFTA) was a major theme of the symposium. Speakers representing labor and domestic manufacturing groups voiced strong opposition to CAFTA, as did the head of the National Farmers Union. Hawaiian Congressman Neil Abercrombie and North Dakota's Senator Kent Conrad, who have been outstanding in their passionate defense of the domestic sugar industry through the years, offered eloquent and well-reasoned explanations of their own fears about CAFTA's impact on the industry.

While impending changes to the European sugar regime have garnered media attention in recent weeks, Brazil remains the eight hundred pound gorilla in the global sugar industry. European sugar subsidies have certainly been an important contributor to the dumping of sugar into the world market over the past few decades, but the reality of today's market is that Brazil, Thailand and others have now supplanted Europe as most onerous distorters of global sugar prices. Unfortunately, none of the bilateral or regional agreements currently being negotiated will provide an opportunity for the US negotiators to affect the trade-distorting practices of these global players, while each such agreement that includes additional sugar imports into the US will further weaken the domestic industry.

News that global trade talks under the auspices of the World Trade Organization had moved forward with an agreement on the framework for agricultural negotiations was cautiously welcomed by industry and government representatives, alike. However, continuing the ill-conceived policy of negotiating away the sugar program in a piecemeal fashion through bilateral and regional negotiations will virtually

ensure that there will be nothing left of the industry by the time the multilateral negotiations are completed.

**An Appropriations Sprint**

Congress returns to Washington, DC in early September with much work to do and little time to do it before adjournment. September 30 marks the end of the current fiscal year and Congress has thus far only approved one of the 13 appropriations bills needed to keep government programs working in the next fiscal year beginning October 1. Look for stop-gap spending measures to keep government offices open through the November elections, then a return of Congress to Washington for a lame-duck session after the elections to approve final spending packages for the remainder of the fiscal year. While we continue to hear suggestions that the lame-duck session could also be used to pass CAFTA, we do not see this as a realistic scenario at this time. However, anything is possible in politics and we will continue to monitor the congressional leadership for any signs of action on this important issue.

**USDA WASDE August Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released**

The USDA released its August World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. 2003/04 beginning stocks remained at 1,661,000 and production was increased slightly to 8,847,000 short tons due to an increase in beet production to 4,802,000 from 4,799,000 short tons in July. Cane production was unchanged at 4,045,000. Louisiana cane sugar production was unchanged at 1,458,000 short tons. Imports were increased to 1,756,000 from 1,744,000 short tons in July due to higher non-program imports that included 30,000 tons molasses, 14,000 tons of 2nd tier imports and 6,000 tons syrups. Exports and use for animal feed were increased by 35,000 tons, resulting in a 20,000 ton decrease in total stocks and ending stocks. The stocks-to-use ratio was lowered to 21.4 percent from 21.6 percent last month.

For 2004/05, total production was increased to 8,587,000 from 8,480,000 short tons, with beet production rising by 113,000 from 4,432,000 last month and cane production falling slightly to 4,042,000 from 4,048,000 short tons in July. Louisiana production was unchanged at 1,562,000 short tons. Imports were projected at 1,629,000 from 1,591,000 last month, reflecting an increase in TRQ imports to 1,229,000 from 1,206,000 short tons and a 15,000 increase in high-tier imports to 50,000 short tons. The lower beginning stocks were offset by the higher production and import numbers, resulting in an increase in total supply to 12,375,000 from 12,250,000 short tons in July. Exports are unchanged at 200,000, deliveries remained at 9,905,000 and re-exports at 190,000. Total use was unchanged at 10,105,000 short tons, resulting in ending stocks of 2,270,000 from 2,145,000 short tons last month, and the stocks-to-use ratio was increased to 22.5 percent from 21.2 percent in July.

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# ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

## Crop Report - Smoke Management
## Variety Advancement Committee Meeting

With night temperatures in the 60's, day temperatures in the 80's, winds out of the north, and a high-pressure system setting on top of the cane belt, one would expect to step out of the house to the pleasant scent of molasses in the air. Although the high-pressure cool front of the past week suggests mid-October weather, it is only mid-August. The high-pressure front of last week was very timely for the Louisiana sugar industry, it steered both tropical storm Bonnie and hurricane Charley east of the industry.

With the continued dry weather many growers are advancing with their plantings. Here on the Teche there are a number of growers who are nearing the completion of their 2004 plantings. These earlier planted fields are now in need of moisture. Because of the over grown fields that resulted from the six weeks of nearly continuous rain, when some growers got their first break in the weather they rushed into the fields and made big clods by working fields too wet. Subsequent workings have made little clods out of the big ones and with no significant rain predicted in the extended weather forecast to melt them before planting, there is the possibility that stands could be hurt. The dry-cloddy pre-planting condition appears to effect fields planted with billet seed cane more than those that are planted with whole-stalk seed cane. With the cost of planting and knowing that they need to harvest at least three crops from a planting, why are growers willing to plant fields in which the seed beds have not been ideally prepared or start planting when seed cane is so short? The number one reason given by growers is, you never know what the weather will do, and there may be another long occurrence of wet weather. The second reason given by growers is, seed plots of LCP 85-384 are erect at this time, but they could fall at anytime and it is much easier to plant straight cane whether by hand or by mechanical planters. The number three reason given for planting fields in less than ideal conditions is harvest season is just around the corner, and I cannot plant cane and deliver cane to the mill at the same time.

This year there is an additional reason for rushing planting in some fields. Many growers have planted most of their other fallow ground with soybeans that have not been harvested yet. Growers are reminded that there is less potential for reduced stands of cane following beans if the bean litter can have two to three weeks to deteriorate before cane is planted in fields from which beans were harvested. Many growers were surprised by the amount of expenses that were incurred during the soybean-growing season. Many fields were sprayed for insects three times and a number of bean fields received two applications of fungicides. Many growers in the traditional cane belt are now remembering why beans have not made inroads into the more southern cane-growing region.

At this time, many growers are reporting disappointing crop estimations after cutting plant cane fields for seed. Many are reporting shorter and thinner stands than expected. Additionally, the stalk weight appears to be somewhat lighter than normal for plant cane. Because of the shortness of older stubble fields, some growers are questioning if they should start harvest in

these short fields or in younger / taller stubble fields. Experiences from previous years indicate that the harvest of the fields of poorer growing older stubble early in harvest is better than harvesting fields of younger stubble and plant cane. Fields of plant cane and first stubble will increase tonnage and sugar per acre through mid-November at a much higher rate than will fields of older stubble. Therefore it is more profitable to apply a harvest-aid (ripener) to the older stunted fields, and let the plant cane and first stubble fields continue to grow.

With the early cool dry weather the sugar content of the crop should be high. Hopefully after a good rain for the planted cane, the dry weather of the last week or so will return and the industry will have a cheap-dry harvest and be able to take advantage of a high sucrose year.

**Smoke Management**

With a number of mills reporting starting dates near mid-September, it is time to refresh our memories on the procedures that were presented during the Certified Prescribed Burn Manager Program. The suggested BMP's are found in "Louisiana Smoke Management Guidelines of Sugarcane Harvesting". If you have lost or misplaced your copy of this booklet please contact your county agent; additionally, there are a few copies available at the League office. In order to be in compliance with the guidelines there must be someone who is certified to be a burn manager at each burn. If there is a need for the first time certification of someone, Dr. Bill Carney has agreed to offer the "Certified Prescribed Burn Manager Program" to new participants at his office. **The only class for 2004 is scheduled for Monday, September 13 at 1:30 PM on the LSU Campus in Room 268D of Knapp Hall**. Participants are requested to pre-register for the class. Pre-registration can be by phone (225/578-6998) or email (bcarney@agctr.lsu.edu). ***This will be the only opportunity to take the class prior to the harvest.*** The original certification certificates were good for five years. All Smoke Management Certifications will expire with the end of the 2004 harvest. Plans for the program and method of re-certification are being prepared by Dr. Carney and representatives from the LSU Extension Service, the LA Department of Agriculture and the American Sugar Cane League. Once the program for re-certification has been established the industry will be informed of where and how to re-certify.

This industry is to be commended for the outstanding job it did during the 2003 harvest. There were very few complaints to either the American Sugar Cane League or the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry. Last harvest there were a few legitimate complaints such as smoke crossing busy roads or getting into people's homes, but the most complaints were from folks who want to see all burning banned. Problems and complaints from the burning of agricultural fields are not just problems for sugarcane. Agricultural Air Quality Task Force (AAQTF) is a Federal task force made up of agricultural research and industry representatives along with USDA representatives. The mission of the task force is to come up with the best possible Federal BMP's for agricultural burning; guidelines that are not so restrictive as to place undue costs and regulations on growers.

Dr. Stephanie Whalen (Director of the Hawaii Agriculture Research Center) is the sugarcane representative on the AAQTF. She has been an active member for a number of terms. Stephanie is stepping down at the end of this year's term. Stephanie is of the opinion that Janet Ashman, a member of the staff at HARC, will be her replacement. The following are excerpts from a report prepared by Dr. Whalen of the most recent Agricultural Air Quality Task Force meeting.

*The pre-meeting tour centered on the blue grass seed growers and their operations. They farm in a watershed that flows into the Coeur d'Alene Lake. The area is rural and primarily a summer tourist destination. The industry includes burning as a tool that has been shown to improve yields significantly. The crop can be harvested annually 7 or more years depending on the local conditions. This is a major advantage in reducing soil erosion in the highly erodible areas of the Rothdam and Polouse Prairies. There are about 81,000 acres of blue grass in Idaho. This industry sector is worth about $20-30M to the state of Idaho. The agricultural sector contributes about $4B to Idaho's economy. There are about 1.4M residents.*

*Agricultural burning is currently the subject of at least 4 lawsuits in this area. The farmers have spent over $500,000 of their own money so far defending themselves in just one case where their insurance does not cover the litigation. Other agricultural owners and/or operators are losing their insurance due to the continuing threats of NGO groups. The fate of agricultural burning in the United States may be decided in these suits as the plaintiffs have indicated that they may take this all the way to the Supreme Court if they do not get their way in the lower courts. The farmers want protection from lawsuits if they are in compliance with their smoke management plans. Apparently, this aspect is also in litigation and if not found in favor of the farmer could have significant impact in other areas where best management practices (conservation management plans, smoke management plans) are being suggested as the farmers' tools for compliance with environmental regulations.*

**Variety Advancement Committee Meeting**

At this time there are three varieties on the secondary stations (L 97-128, Ho 95-988, and L 98-209). Both L 97-128 and Ho 95-988 were released at the May meeting of the Variety Release Committee. The league's staff is in the midst of processing requests for seed of L 97-128. There appears to be a few less requests for this variety than there was for the variety released last year (Ho 96-540). The date for the return of applications for an allotment of L 97-128 was August 6th. The notices of the amount of seed cane allotted to growers were mailed on Wednesday, August 11. Growers have already started returning their seed cane payments. However, it will take about two weeks to get in all of the payments returned from the growers for their allocations of seed. Because this amount of time is required to complete the needed correspondences, it will probably be sometime after the first of September before the seed cane of L 97-128 can be distributed.

The Variety Advancement Committee dropped Ho 95-988 (heavy smut in test fields) from the seed increase and testing programs in 2000, and then reinstated it in 2002. Although the variety was released this year there is not enough seed on the secondary stations to sell this year. There are only the initial plantings of Ho 95-988 on the secondary stations. The secondary stations have been requested to replant a maximum increase of Ho 95-988. Ho 95-988 will be offered for sale and distribution in 2005. In plant cane and stubble outfield tests, Ho 95-988's sugar per acre has been equal to or greater than that of LCP 85-384. On most all secondary stations the stands of Ho 95-988 are very impressive, with very few stools of smut in them.

At the August 13th meeting of the Variety Advancement Committee, the committee unanimously voted to drop L 98-209 from the seed increase and testing programs. In the latest observations of outfield tests and seed increase stations L 98-209 was erratic. At some locations the variety appeared to be very promising, however in the majority of the observations, due to the lack of population and height, L 97-209's yield potential was very disappointing.

The Variety Advancement Committee selected two new varieties for introduction to the secondary stations (L 99-226 and L 99-233). In hand-harvested nursery plots and replicated infield tests both varieties have yielded significantly more sugar per acre than LCP 85-384.

In the early stages of testing, the data indicates that L 99-226 is a high-sucrose, high-tonnage variety that has the potential to produce more sugar per acre than LCP 85-384. The data indicates that its population is less than 384's, but that L 99-226's stalk weight is greater. Hopefully these heavier stalks will be an advantage to combine harvesting. At this time the only "dark cloud" over L 99-226 is that it is susceptible to leaf scald. There have been some initial indications that L 99-226 is very susceptible to leaf scald; time and testing will tell.

Test data collected so far indicates that L 99-223's yields of sugar per acre are equal to those of 384. However its sugar per ton of cane appears to be somewhat less than 384's. The variety's tonnage appears to come from a high population of stalks that are equal to 85-384 in weight. It is too early to get too excited about L 99-223, and again, time and data will tell the tale.

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By Dr. Peter Rein
Audubon Sugar Institute
Louisiana State University AgCenter

# Feasibility Study on the Production of Fuel Alcohol from Louisiana Molasses

There is heightened interest in the production and use of fuel alcohol in Louisiana. The high oil price is a reminder of the fact that the US is an importer of oil and that a greater degree of self-sufficiency is desirable. The emphasis at this time of year on high ozone concentrations in the atmosphere reinforces the need for cleaner burning fuels. The use of ethanol in a blend of 10% ethanol in gasoline helps in both respects, and does not require any modifications to be made to automobiles.

It never pays in any sugar industry, without substantial artificial incentives, to make ethanol from sucrose that can be recovered as crystalline sugar. However, it is almost always economically justifiable to produce ethanol from molasses. This may be one way in which additional value can be extracted from the sugar cane crop.

**Molasses availability**

The price of molasses is low and so the opportunity exists to add more value by fermenting the sugars in molasses to ethanol. The quantity of molasses produced averages about 5.3 gal (as produced) per ton cane, equivalent to about 3.0% molasses on cane by weight. Thus based on a crop of 15 million tons cane/year, it is expected that 450,000 tons molasses will be available each year.

Most plants are more economically viable at a large size. It would pay therefore to have a single plant to process all the Louisiana molasses, although there may be some reason why this is not possible.

A detailed analysis of Louisiana molasses is available for the last 4 years from the Audubon Sugar Institute. This shows on average a true sucrose content of 35.4% and a reducing sugar (fructose and glucose) content of 14.6%. Thus the fermentable sugar content of molasses is close to 50%.

**Ethanol Yields**

The invert sugars, glucose and fructose, are fermented to yield ethanol and carbon dioxide. Sucrose is hydrolyzed to invert sugars before fermentation and in the process each mole of sucrose takes up a mole of water as shown below:

$$C_{12}H_{22}O_{11} + H_2O \rightarrow 2C_6H_{12}O_6$$

$$C_6H_{12}O_6 \rightarrow 2C_2H_5OH + 2CO_2$$

The theoretical (stoichiometric) yield of ethanol from sucrose is 1076 lb/ton sucrose (538 kg/m.t), or 163 gal/ton sucrose (680 liters/m.t) based on a liquid density of 0.791 kg/ℓ at 20°C. This assumes that the sucrose hydrolyzes to invert sugars and further that only ethanol and carbon dioxide are produced as products. The relationship between ethanol and invert sugars is slightly different, because of the water uptake in the hydrolysis of sucrose. Thus the theoretical yield from invert sugar is 1022 lb/ton invert or 155 gal/ton invert sugar. In practice a number of other products are also formed, and Pasteur in a series of classic experiments established that the maximum obtainable yield under ideal conditions was 94.5% of theoretical i.e. a yield of 154 gal/ton of sucrose.

Laboratory yields generally average around 149 gal/ton TSAS (total sugars as

sucrose). Under practical plant operating conditions, an annual yield of 95% of this i.e. 141 gal/ton TSAS, is considered to be a reasonable design figure. This represents 86.6% of the theoretical yield, compared to values of 91 to 92% reported recently from Brazil.

**Fermentation systems**

A classical batch fermentation system operates without yeast re-cycle. Each batch may be started with new yeast or more often some yeast is kept from a previous batch as seed yeast. Each batch is initiated in a prefermenter, into which air is blown for the aerobic growth phase and where the pH is regulated and nutrients are added. The yeast concentration has to be at the right level before passing to one of the main fermenters. The fermentation cycle is about two days. Fermentation proceeds under anaerobic conditions and cooling is necessary to remove the heat produced by fermentation and to control the temperature between 30 and 34°C. The fermentation section is designed so that the whole plant, including the interconnecting pipe work, can be properly drained, cleaned by water and sterilized by steam to guard against infection. A commercial yeast is normally used in the fermentation process, since the yeast adapts to the fermentation conditions and gives yields as good as those obtained from special yeasts.

The system practiced in Brazil is the Melle-Boinet system, whereby yeast is continuously separated from the fermented mash and re-cycled back to fermentation. This has the significant advantage that yeast concentrations can be kept high, leading to fast fermentation rates, and hence lower fermentation volumes. In addition less carbohydrate is required to grow the yeast, and so in theory at least, results in higher fermentation yields. It is necessary to limit bacterial contamination by acid washing of the yeast, and the occasional addition of antibiotics is necessary.

A great deal of attention has been given to improving the efficiency of fermentation. Some of this has focused on making use of continuous rather than batch systems. Continuous fermentation leads to more efficient use of fermenter volumes; however fermenter volume is probably the least expensive part of the ethanol plant and in general continuous systems have not always been able to match the yields achieved by batch systems. Contamination is more likely in a continuous system and if it occurs, the losses are high. At present therefore batch fermentation is a safer option.

The vapor produced from the vats is scrubbed in packed towers, and the vapors produced can be sent to a carbon dioxide plant. The fermentation equations show that one mole of $CO_2$ is produced for each mole of ethanol, so on a mass basis almost as much $CO_2$ as ethanol is produced. Carbon dioxide can in some cases be a profitable by-product and in addition the vapor scrubbing recovers ethanol vapor which would otherwise be lost. It is considered to raise the yield by around 1%.

**Distillation**

The ethanol concentration in the fermented liquor is normally about 9% by volume and is recovered by distillation. It is general practice to produce ethanol in anhydrous form for use as a fuel extender. Thus there are two major steps in the distillation process:

a) The stripping and rectification to produce rectified spirits (96% ethanol by volume).
b) Dehydration to produce anhydrous ethanol, either by azeotropic distillation or through the use of molecular sieves.

The fermented mash fed to the stripping column is first heated by the rectifier overheads and then by heat exchange with stillage from the stripping column. It enters near the top of the stripping column, and alcohol-free stillage is produced at the bottom. At the top of the column is a small de-gasifying section with a small aldehyde concentration column. Vapor from the stripping column passes to the bottom of one or more rectification columns and rectified spirits is produced as the top product from

this stage. This is produced as a constant boiling ethanol-water azeotropic mixture containing about 96% ethanol by volume and is referred to as rectified spirits.

Traditionally the remaining water has been removed by azeotropic distillation involving the addition of cyclohexane. A better option now available involves dehydration using molecular sieves. The ethanol leaves rectification as a vapor, and water is adsorbed in zeolite packed beds. Periodically these adsorbents need to be regenerated by flooding them with ethanol vapor, which strips off the water and is returned to distillation. Steam consumption in this system is considerably lower.

Fusel oil is removed from the rectifying column. Both aldehydes and the fusel oils interfere with the dehydration step, and so need to be removed. They have little additional value on their own, and may be sold separately or even added back into the product fuel.

After distillation, the ethanol is cooled and pumped to run down tanks and from there to the product storage tanks. It is produced at a quality of 99.8% ethanol, and is denatured before being pumped to rail tank cars for transport to the oil company depots. Distillation efficiency is normally very high and a value of 99% is commonly assumed for the recovery of ethanol in distillation.

The distillation columns often use sieve plates, or some variant of sieve trays, rather than the bubble cap trays which are the traditional choice in Brazil. Sieve plates have the advantage that they are able to operate over a wide range of throughput rates at high efficiency, but are particularly useful in the stripping column, since scaling can be severe in this column and they are easier to clean. The lower the purity of the feedstock used, the more serious is the scaling problem in this column. The distillation plant has to be taken off-line roughly every four weeks when using a low purity feedstock to clean the column. This is done by boiling caustic in the column followed if necessary by a manual brushing of the plates.

The conventional distillation system is not designed to be particularly fuel efficient. Various modifications of the system are possible, which make use of double effect distillation or mechanical vapor recompression to improve the steam economy of the plant. These generally involve utilizing the condenser of one column as the re-boiler for another and require therefore that some of the columns do not operate at atmospheric pressure. This inevitably increases the capital cost of the plant.

Table 1 gives some idea of possible improvements in steam economy and the increased requirements in terms of capital and steam pressure. The steam efficient systems generally run the stripping column under vacuum. This has the advantage of reducing the extent of scaling occurring.

**Storage and handling**

Once anhydrous ethanol has been produced, it has to be handled and stored with care to ensure that it does not absorb or get contaminated with water.

| Steam Pressure (kPa) | Steam Usage kg/ℓ ethanol | Comparative Capital Cost | Type of Plant |
|---|---|---|---|
| 220 | 4.5 | 1.0 | Conventional |
| 250 | 2.8 | 1.25 | Mash column under vacuum; mol. sieve dehydration |
| 800 | 2.0 | 1.35 | Multi-pressure distillation |

**Table 1:** Comparative capital costs of distillation plant to achieve different steam economy in distillation.

Ethanol for fuel use is usually denatured on site with an acceptable additive.

**Stillage production and disposal**

In the case of ethanol production from corn, the effluent stream after the alcohol has been distilled off has a significant value as an animal feed. Because of this it can substantially improve the economics of an ethanol from corn operation.

By contrast, the effluent product in the ethanol from a sugarcane plant is generally the source of a severe problem. Depending on the process used, the quantity of vinasse or stillage produced varies from about 8 to 15 gal of stillage per gal of ethanol produced. The solids content of the stillage varies depending on the purity of material used as feedstock. In general it contains between 5 to 12% dissolved solids.

The quality of stillage can be reduced i.e. its concentration raised, by recycling part of the stillage back to the fermenters. This technique has been used with no adverse effect in a number of plants.

Various options for effluent handling are as follows:

- Irrigation: This is the simplest and cheapest method and has substantial value as a source of potash. However care must be taken not to overload the soil; ideally the stillage should be returned to the total area from which the cane originated, or else the buildup of both organic and inorganic components to excessively high levels will occur, resulting in poisoning of the soil and a fall-off in the cane yield. Return of stillage to the fields is the system widely practiced in Brazil, but the cost of returning stillage to the fields furthest from the mill can be very high.
- Evaporation: If more concentrated effluent can be produced, it may have use as a binder in animal feeds, or merely reduce the quantity of material and hence transport costs to outlying fields. However, the high capital cost of stainless steel evaporators, the need to clean with aggressive chemicals and the additional steam required generally makes this an unfavorable option. Integration of the evaporation with distillation can however reduce the steam usage significantly.
- Solar Evaporation: The evaporation of stillage in large shallow ponds can be a feasible option in areas where the cane growing operation relies on irrigation, and not natural rainfall. In most cane producing areas, the natural rainfall is so high that this option would be impractical.
- Spray Drying: This may be used to produce a concentrated feed for animals. It has to be preceded by evaporation to get the solids content to above 50% by weight.
- Biological Treatment: Anaerobic fermentation producing methane as a by-product has been shown to be feasible. Sufficient gas can be produced to supply a significant proportion of fuel needed for the ethanol plant. However, the anaerobic reactors are large and cumbersome, and the effluent from the still has a COD too high for disposal or reuse and requires further treatment.
- Incineration: This process has considerable attraction on paper, particularly because a significant amount of the fuel value of the concentrated stillage is recovered, and the solid ash product has considerable fertilizer value. Incineration of concentrated stillage has been shown to be possible. However, the process has not yet been proven successful over a long period of time, and the capital involved is high.
- Composting: Distillers in India and Pakistan add stillage to filter cake on large concrete slabs. The heat generated by the composting process is sufficient to evaporate the water, and very good quality compost high in potash is produced. The disadvantages are the very large areas required for composting and the cost of transporting a bulky relatively low value product to the market.
- Recovery of high value products: The stillage has small quantities of components of some value such as glycerol, succinic acid and aconitic acid, which could be recovered and sold. However the recovery processes involved are not simple and the bulk of the stillage still needs to be disposed of.

Of the options available, the use of a high-rate anaerobic reactor is probably the best. The biogas produced has value as a fuel for use in the boilers, and helps off-set the cost of treatment. The liquid from the anaerobic reactor does not meet standards for re-use or disposal, and must be ponded or an activated sludge plant is required.

**Ethanol production rate**

The average molasses analysis of 35.4% sucrose and 14.6% invert, if converted to an equivalent sucrose basis, is 49.2% sucrose. Assuming a yield (fairly conservative) of 141.6 gal/ton sucrose (590 ℓ ethanol/metric ton), one ton of molasses will yield 69.7 gal ethanol.

Based on 450,000 t molasses/year, annual ethanol production will be 31.4 million gal/year. Assuming the plant operates 330 days/year, this implies a production rate of 95,000 gal/day.

**Costs**

Ethanol production is not a capital-intensive process. The capital cost of a plant to produce 32 million gal/year is expected to be $41 million, based on budget prices and previous experience. This includes the cost of a biogas stillage treatment facility and an allowance for infrastructure and integration into a sugar mill. The cost and time required for permitting are unknowns and the overall capital required is still a rough estimate.

The major element in the cost of production is the cost of the raw material i.e. molasses. The price of cane molasses varies over time, generally in the range of $40 to $60/ton. Based on the average of $50/ton, the raw material cost based on 69.7 gal/ton molasses is 50/69.7 = $0.717/gal. It has been well established that the cost of production is largely dependent on the cost of the feedstock, which generally represents two-thirds of the total cost. In this case therefore a cost of production of $1.08/gal is expected. If the price of molasses varies by $10/ton, the cost will change by 14c/gal.

Ethanol prices are historically quite variable, but have been consistently around $1.40 over the past two years.

Gasoline blended with 10% ethanol is exempt from 5.3 cents of the 18.3 cent/gal Federal excise tax on gasoline. This provides an effective subsidy of 53c/gal of ethanol produced when used in gasoline at 10%, generally making it cost competitive with MTBE as an additive for improving the octane rating. A total of 36 states also provide some sort of incentive for ethanol production or use, but Louisiana is not one of those states.

**Project return**

Assuming that ethanol can be made for $1.08/gal and sold for $1.40/gal, the annual net earnings on 31.4 M gal/year are $10.4 million. Based on an initial capital outlay of $41 million, a simple payback period of 3.9 years is indicated.

Air quality regulations requiring oxygenated reformulated gasoline for ground-level ozone (smog) reduction strongly support ethanol use in specific geographic markets. In addition, congressional proposals for a renewable fuel standard mandating an increasing percentage of renewable fuels have not yet been passed. Enactment of a program along these lines could be a boost to ethanol production. A possible "carbon tax" would also help.

**Conclusions**

Based on initial approximate estimates, it appears that the production of ethanol from final molasses may be a commercially viable proposition in Louisiana. The viability is sensitive to the price that can otherwise be obtained from molasses and the long-term sustainable price for fuel alcohol.

There is inevitably going to be more pressure to use reformulated gasoline to reduce ozone problems and to conform to initiatives to use fuels from renewable resources. This should make ethanol manufacture more attractive in future.

Ethanol production from molasses is a very well-developed technology and is essentially a risk-free investment technically. The level of technology is similar to that involved in sugar production and integrates well into a sugar factory operation.

In view of restrictions on sugar production with quotas, there may be special circumstances which make ethanol production from B molasses a viable option.

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# ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

By James F. Coerver, P.E.
G.E.C., Inc.

## Reformulated Gasoline Reprieve

Reformulated gasoline is a blend of hydrocarbons from refining crude petroleum, usually containing an "oxidant" such as ethanol, which is intended to lower pollutant emissions from automobile engines. Current U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rules require the use of such reformulated gasoline during summer months in areas that are in severe "non-attainment" of the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for photochemical oxidants (ozone). The use of reformulated gasoline is supposed to help reduce ozone formation but does little if any good in that regard, and especially not in the Baton Rouge ozone "non-compliance" area according to knowledgeable scientists including those at the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ). Because Baton Rouge was nearly in compliance with the old (one-hour averaging time) ozone standard, and would almost certainly comply with a new (eight-hour) ozone standard prior to mandatory compliance deadline, LDEQ had requested that the Baton Rouge area be exempted from the punitive and onerous reformulated gasoline requirement. EPA at first indicated concurrence, but mischief-making environmentalists sued EPA and were successful in compelling EPA to classify the Baton Rouge ozone situation as "severe" and impose the useless, wasteful and expensive summertime reformulated gasoline requirement in the entire five-parish Baton Rouge ozone non-attainment area beginning in the Summer of 2004.

As the June 23, 2004 deadline approached, gasoline prices were already very high and rising with the price of crude oil which reached an all-time high only yesterday. When the general public became aware of an impending price increase for gasoline reformulation, and there would be no measurable environmental benefit, there was widespread complaint. Also, an EPA report released on April 15, 2004 indicated that the Baton Rouge area would be classified as only "marginal" in regard to compliance with the new and purportedly more stringent eight-hour ozone standard, which new standard the EPA and environmentalists insisted was necessary to protect public health, whereas Baton Rouge "non-compliance" with the old and supposedly less stringent one-hour standard was classified as "severe". Never-the-less, EPA said it was compelled to enforce the "severe" reformulated gasoline measure on Baton Rouge on the basis of the old (and now obsolete) one-hour standard because of what is known as "anti-backsliding" measures, sacred to all environmentalists. The general public finally recognized the humbug and demanded relief. Politicians of all political persuasions and public interest groups cooperated in filing a suit in Federal Court to block enforcement of reformulated gasoline, and were granted a temporary stay a day or so before the June 23 deadline.

More recently, a Federal District Court ruled that a temporary delay in enforcement of the gasoline reformulation was extended until that Court has time for a full hearing and due consideration of the case. Not surprisingly, consideration of the case will not occur until after the summer ozone season is over and most likely not until after the upcoming presidential election in November. Thus, the good news is that the Baton Rouge area dodges the reformulated gasoline rule during calendar year 2004, but the bad news is there is no end in sight for this and similar environmental travesties.

Recent news media coverage indicates that environmental misinformation and deceptive accusations will be prevalent through the November elections. Neither of the "pro-environment" major political parties would welcome public scrutiny of the ridiculous reformulated gasoline issue at this time.

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# Dedicated Research Funding Summaries

***Scientists who receive funding from the League's Dedicated Research Committee are requested to prepare a short summary of their work at the end of the year. Those reports will be published each month until all of them have been printed. The following are reports from research during the year 2003.***

**Sugar Factory Equipment Evaluation,** *Harold Birkett and Jeanie Stein, Audubon Sugar Institute, LSU AgCenter*

The data gathered in 2003 is a continuation of a project started two years earlier to evaluate continuous and batch pans, vertical and horizontal crystallizers and various types of massecuite reheaters. During the 2003-04 crop crystallizer equipment (vertical and Blanchard) and reheaters (Fletcher Smith, Bosch and Stevens) were evaluated at 11 sugar factories (20 visits). Temperatures, along with massecuite and molasses samples, were obtained from the pan, crystallizers and centrifugals. Temperatures of cooling water into and out of crystallizers and massecuite reheaters were also measured where possible.

**Status and Results of 2003 Project:**

Data on the mother liquor purity at the time of striking, out of the coldest crystallizer, after reheating and out of the factory centrifugals was collected. Massecuite at the time of striking had a high average temperature of 158°F to date, ranging from 135°F to 178°F. The average massecuite temperature leaving the coldest crystallizer of 120°F was also high (range of 100°F to 138°F). Reheated massecuite temperatures ranged from 111°F to 142°F with an average of 129°F. Results to date indicate that the purity drop in the crystallizers is normal, and that the purity gain on reheating averaged about one purity point. The purity rise across the low grade centrifugals was found to be very variable, with a low of about -1 purity point to a high of over 9 purity points and an average of 2.63 purity points. Poor low grade centrifugal performance is the primary contributor to high final molasses purity.

In conjunction with the above tests the viscosity of C massecuite at the various collection points was also determined at the operating temperature in the factory. The viscosity of the C massecuite at striking varied from 42,000 to 724,000 cP (centipoises). The viscosity of the massecuite leaving the coldest crystallizer varied from 195,000 to 2,600,000 cP, while the viscosity of the reheated massecuite varied from 68,000 to 1,200,000 cP.

The increase in mother liquor purity across the centrifugals appears to be highly dependent on the viscosity of the massecuite being centrifuged. The purity rise for reheated massecuites in the 200,000 cP range was 2 purity points, increasing 9 purity points for viscous massecuites (1,200,000 cP).

Data on the performance of three large stationary reheaters (one Honiron and two Fletcher Smith units) and one small Stevens coil reheater are shown in the table below.

| Type | H.S. Sq. Ft. | Mass., Cu.Ft./Day | Mass. Temp., °F | | Water Temp., °F | | H.T.C., Btu/Hr/ Sq.ft./°F | Purity Rise |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | In | Out | In | Out | | |
| HON | 7,534 | 15,785 | 113 | 138 | 155 | 150 | 3.9 | 0.7 |
| FS | 5,436 | 10,500 | 104 | 134 | 150 | 134 | 4.9 | 0.8 |
| FS | 7,350 | 9,859 | 132 | 140 | 146 | 142 | 2.7 | 0.4 |
| STE | 595 | 9,179 | 117 | 130 | 167 | 164 | 9.1 | 0.5 |

All reheater types in the four tests above resulted in small purity rises in the mother liquor (0.4 to 0.8 purity points). Of interest is the limited resolution for the Stevens coil in spite of a very high reheating water temperature (167°F). The heat transfer coefficients (based on massecuite temperature) for the Stevens coil was over twice as high (9.1 Btu/hr/sq.ft./°F) as for the stationary reheaters (2.7 to 4.9 Btu/hr/sq.ft./°F).

Tracer tests were conducted on three types of vertical crystallizers (Honiron, Silver and Fletcher Smith) and one set of Blanchard crystallizers. The concentration of the tracer (zinc) in the massecuite leaving the crystallizer as a function of time was determined. In the case of the Honiron crystallizer the tracer peaked in 2 hours (nominal retention 11 hours). In the case of the Silver crystallizer the tracer peaked in about 10 hours (nominal retention time 17 hours). The Fletcher Smith crystallizer's tracer peak was reached after 38 hours (nominal retention time 42 hours). Results from the tracer test conducted on Blanchard crystallizers are pending, as is a repeated test on the Fletcher Smith crystallizer.

Evaluation of sugar factory equipment will continue during the 2004 crop.

• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •

**Summary of Activities in the LSU Sugarcane Variety Development Program,** *Kenneth A. Gravois and Keith P. Bischoff, Sugar Research Station*

The primary objective of the LSU Agricultural Center Sugarcane Variety Development Program is to contribute to the profitability of the Louisiana sugarcane industry by developing improved sugarcane varieties. A total of 73,160 seedlings from 192 crosses from the 2002 crossing series were planted in the field in the spring of 2003. A total of 66,011 seedlings survived transplanting. In addition, 6,164 seedlings were planted in a cross appraisal trial. The majority of the seedlings were from crosses of commercial varieties and elite experimental varieties. Selection will be carried out in 2004 when the seedlings are in the first stubble crop.

Photoperiod treatments to induce flowering began on May 31 and continued until September 10. Flowering in 2003 was excellent, with 513 crosses being made. Germination tests were conducted in December and January. Seed production for 2003 should be more than adequate based on early germination test results, with more than 451,000 true seed produced during 2003.

In the fall of 2003, individual selection was practiced on 46,325 first stubble seedlings that represented the 2001 crossing series. Family selection (top 78% in 200) was utilized based on information from the cross appraisal study. Of the 46,325 clones, 3,603 were selected and planted to establish the first-line trials.

Established procedures were used to advance superior clones of the 2000 crossing series from first-line trials to second-line trials (699 clones) and of the 1999 crossing series from second-line trials to increase trials (152 clones). After preliminary ratings for cane yield and plant type in August, clones with acceptable ratings were further evaluated for lodging, borer damage, presence of disease, presence of pith/tube, and Brix/sugar per ton.

The best 35 experimental varieties from the 1998 crossing series were assigned permanent variety designations in the fall of 2003. Newly assigned varieties were entered in replicated nursery trials at three locations (St. Gabriel Research Station, USDA Ardoyne Farm, and Iberia Research Station). "L", "HoCP, or Ho" varieties of the 2003 and 2002 series were exchanged in the fall of 2003 to plant cooperative infield and nursery tests the following year.

Experimental varieties were replanted in infield and nursery tests (14 varieties of the 2002 series), introduced to the outfield tests (three varieties of the 2001 series), and planted in outfield tests (one variety of the 1997 series; one variety of the 1998 series; two varieties of the 1999 series; one variety of the 2000 series). Breeding personnel assisted Dr. Jeff Hoy and Dr. Gene Reagan to enter experimental varieties in the sugarcane smut and sugarcane borer resistance trials, respectively.

The decision regarding the further testing and seed increase of candidate varieties was determined at the Variety Advancement Committee meeting. The 2003 meeting was held on August 13, 2003 at the American Sugar Cane League office in Thibodaux.

Table 1. Number of L varieties by assignment series at the most advanced stage of testing in 2003.

| Series | Stage of Testing | Number of experimental varieties |
|---|---|---|
| L 1997 | Outfield - Replanted and harvested as plantcane, first stubble, and second stubble | 1 |
| L 1998 | Outfield – Replanted and harvested as plantcane and first stubble<br>Off-station nurseries – 3rd stubble harvested | 1 |
| L 1999 | Outfield – Replanted and harvested as plantcane<br>On-station nurseries – 3rd stubble harvested<br>Off-station nurseries – 2nd stubble harvested | 2 |
| L 2000 | Outfield – PlantedOn-station nurseries - 2nd stubble harvested<br>Off-station nurseries – 1st stubble harvested | 1 |
| L 2001 | Outfield – Introduced<br>On-station nurseries 1st stubble harvested<br>Off-station nurseries plantcane harvested | 3 |
| L 2002 | On-station nurseries plantcane harvested<br>Off-station nurseries planted. | 15 |
| L 2003 | Assignment - On-station nurseries planted | 35 |

**Utilization of Basic Germplasm in Developing High-Yielding Sugarcane Cultivars**, *John Veremis, Research Geneticist, Thomas Tew, Research Geneticist, Edwis Dufrene, Agronomist, Donnie Garrison, Agronomist, Michael Grisham, Research Plant Pathologist, Sarah Lingle, Research Plant Physiologist, Yong-Bao Pan, Research Plant Molecular Geneticist, William White, Research Entomologist, Ed Richard, Research Leader, USDA-ARS, SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA*

The basic breeding program was expanded with the goal of broadening the genetic diversity in sugarcane with selected new and old parents that were utilized to produce new superior cultivars for Louisiana. With the funding we received during the past years, we have doubled our photoperiod treatment capacity by increasing the number of parents that can be maintained in the same space as used previously. We have taken steps to minimize the risk of pollen contamination in our crossing cubicles. We made over 2,100 highly determined crosses to maximize compatibility with selected parents during 2002 and 2003 breeding seasons. This will allow us to select and evaluate a large number of family combinations with new blood, rather than large numbers of individuals within a few families from old blood.

**Acquired**

The USDA basic breeding program acquired seeds and eye-pieces of select *Saccharum* species and related genera from Canal Point, Florida collections and germinated them in Houma, Louisiana. We imported more than 100 new clones of phenotype select *Erianthus, Miscanthus, Saccharum sinense, S. barberi, S. robustum,* and *S. officinarum* and hybrids of *Sorghum* with *Saccharum*. It is anticipated that imported germplasm of *Saccharum, Erianthus* and *Miscanthus* germplasm with desirable agronomic traits such as sucrose accumulation, enhanced vigour, pest resistance and cold tolerance will broaden the genetic base and contribute agronomic genes for improving performance of varieties under Louisiana conditions.

**Synchronized**

We forced flowering in and out of season using natural and artificial photoperiod treatments to synchronize selected parental varieties. We conducted photoperiod experiments with new and old clones of *S. spontaneum* to setback or advance and facilitate their flowering, making them available multiple times in the season for crossing with photoperiod-treated cultivars. As a result, this was the first time that some *S. spontaneum* clones were used as male parents in determined crosses. We utilized outdoor racks, photoperiod houses and a breeding greenhouse to create a suitable environment for flowering, crossing, seed production and maturity. We broadened the genetic base by developing new and improved sugarcane germplasm through synchronization to hybridize select *Saccharum* species and related genera.

**Reduced contamination**

We enclosed the cubicles with screen to minimize the risk of pollen contamination. We increased the quality, number and range of interspecific and intergeneric crosses to maximize heterozygosity. We also bagged all crosses to minimize the risk of contamination. We made 1100 crosses in Houma at 2003 season that involved new *S. spontaneum* germplasm from Thailand and China for long and short range improvement of sugarcane. We bar-coded the parental wild-derivative and commercials clones to facilitate crossing in the breeding program. We systematically backcrossed and recombined progeny using conventional approaches to advance important traits.

**Emasculation experiments**

We conducted cold temperature emasculation experiments with greenhouse and cold box (45F) environments, and hot water emasculation of parents and hybrid clones, to examine the combined

effect time exposure and low or high temperature exposure in an effort to minimize selfing of the female parent in our crosses. We stored pollen of selected male parents at -80 C and stained for viability of pollen and pollen tube growth. Cold temperature emasculation experiments were more effective than hot water emasculation.

**Cold tolerance**

From the 2002 season we evaluated all the crosses that germinated and selected the best under field conditions to be utilized in the breeding for 2004 (we assigned US03-1 to 181 to be evaluated further in our program). We participated in the planting and evaluation of more than 120,000 experimental seedlings into the first stage of field selection. During Spring 2002, we transplanted 45,000 selected seedlings from basic crosses (commercial type X wild sugarcane), for evaluation studies and selection. We planted 8,000 selections from reported cold tolerance clones from our collection to be evaluated for early spring emergence in the field. During Spring 2003, at the seedling ratoon stage, $F_1$ progeny from Tainan X LCP85-384 (*S. spontaneum* X commercial) were identified as superior for early spring emergence. This cross was rated as significantly more vigorous than other basic and commercial crosses in the field. Furthermore, 10 selections from Tainan X LCP85-384 were planted in a replicated field test to evaluate spring emergence in 2004. During Winter 2002-2003, we phenotyped and selected 2,169 seedlings from 11 crosses between 10 different *S. spontaneum* (used as the female) and 6 different commercial-type clones to be tested as hybrids and under natural exposure to winter conditions at Ardoyne farm. In February 2003, we identified 10 of 234 $F_1$ hybrids from SES 234 X LCP85-384, which expressed phenotypic stalk and leaf cold tolerance after a 23°F (-5°C) freeze over two hours in January 2003. The ten hybrids were phenotypically distinct, expressing minimum levels of dead leaf tissue and no damage to stalk or terminal buds. These cold-tolerant progeny were included on the stations breeding carts and racks and were backcrossed in 2003, and replanted in a replicated test in the field to further define the degree of stalk cold tolerance after a freeze with juice sucrose and dextran quality and quantity.

**Sugar**

During harvest seasons 2002 and 2003, more recent acquired and older *Saccharum* accessions were evaluated for sugar and cane yield components under our temperate climate. Our core collection of 60 representative clones from *S. spontaneum* were evaluated in the juice lab to quantify intra-species variability for % brix and fiber expression before and after flowering, which indicated that flowering reduces % brix and TRS. We collaborated with Dr. Lingle for the evaluation of the promoter region and 14 introns of sucrose synthase gene (Sus2) to identify marker polymorphism in our parental germplasm and then evaluated two F1 interspecific progenies with identified polymorphism to prove their hybridity. The F1 progeny of *S. officinarum* Louisiana Stripe as a female with *S. spontaneum* SES 147B(grandparent of TUCCP77-42) were verified as true hybrids with polymorphism of Intron 14 and promoter **indel** of Sus2. The F1 progeny of *S. spontaneum* SES84-58 as a female with *S. officinarum* LCP85-384 were verified as true hybrids with polymorphism of Intron 5 of Sus2. Since commercial sugarcane genotypes are interspecific hybrids with variable chromosome assortment, these markers will allow selection for desirable *Sus2* alleles. Particular indel and SSR markers were specific to particular species in the *Saccharum* complex: Insert A (246bp) is specific to *S. officinarum*; and Insert B (300bp) is specific to *Erianthus*. We utilized exotic germplasm in conventional and molecular genetic development of a germplasm to meet the needs and conditions of Louisiana. By augmenting traditional approaches with new molecular screening techniques, we anticipate that new germplasm of *Saccharum, Erianthus, Sorghum* and *Miscanthus* will further broaden and improve the genetic base of sugarcane and increase sugar accumulation. We initiated evaluations of genetic diversity among our wild parents and progenies for biotic resistance traits to mosaic virus and RSD (with Dr. Grisham) and sugarcane borer (with Dr. White).

**Support for the USDA-ARS Juice Quality Laboratory,** *Ed Richard, Jr., Research Leader/Location Coordinator, USDA-ARS, SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA, Cooperating Agencies: USDA-ARS, SRRC, Houma and New Orleans, LA, Louisiana State University AgCenter's: Audubon Sugar Institute, Experiment Station, and Extension Service, Baton Rouge, LA, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Lafayette, LA, Sugar Processing Research Institute, Inc., New Orleans, LA, American Sugar Cane League, Thibodaux, LA, Kleentek, Baton Rouge, LA, U. S. Sugar Corp., Clewiston, FL, Calvin Viator and Associates, Thibodaux, LA*

The Louisiana sugar industry has been "raising cane" for over 200 years. To insure the continued existence of this industry from the threats of foreign competition will require that sugar yields continue to increase and input costs reduced. ARS researchers at Houma and New Orleans, working independently and cooperatively with university and industry partners, are: developing new varieties and evaluating chemical and non-chemical ripeners to increase sugar yields; exploring new uses for the cane plant and the vegetative matter it produces; and evaluating new cultural and harvesting practices and disease, insect, and weed management strategies to increase efficiency and/or reduce production costs to insure that growers and processors have the information needed to maximize profits and meet the challenges of foreign competition.

The USDA-ARS's Sugarcane Research Unit's Juice Quality Lab located at its Ardoyne Research Farm plays a vital role in the development of this information particularly as it relates to varietal and treatment implications on factors that influence theoretically recoverable sugar levels and ultimately per acre sugar yields. During the 2003 harvest season, the Unit's juice quality lab processed 7,330 samples with 3,351 (52%) of the samples being subjected to the prebreaker/press method of analysis to get a better idea of variety/treatment effects on the various juice components that affect sugar recovery (See attachments 1 and 2 for a breakdown). An increase in lab floor space and the integration of new computer software and improvements in equipment automation, funded in large part through monies made available by the Dedicated Research Funding Committee, have all played a part in increasing the efficiency of the technical staff and their ability to meet the demands to process an increasing number of samples on a daily basis. Computerization has also minimized the chances for errors during data entry and transcription and has provided a data base for statistical analysis for the ARS, university, and industry (ASCL, consultants, etc.) scientists who use the facility.

Table 1. Five-year summary of samples processed through the USDA-ARS Sugarcane Research Unit's Juice Quality Lab at the Ardoyne Research Farm. 1999-2003.

| Year | Roller Mill | Prebreaker/Press | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1999 | 4,408 | 2,420 (35%) | 6,828 |
| 2000 | 4,284 | 1,599 (27%) | 5,883 |
| 2001 | 3,561 | 2,149 (38%) | 5,710 |
| 2002 | 3,130 | 3,351 (52%) | 6,481 |
| 2003 | 3,330 | 4,000 (55%) | 7,330 |
| Average | 3,743 | 2,704 (42%) | 6,447 |

**Table 2.** User Scientists, number of analyses, and percent of total samples processed through the USDA-ARS's Sugarcane Research Unit's Juice Quality Lab at the Ardoyne Research Farm during the 2003 harvest season.

| Scientist | Affiliation | Roller mill No. of analyses | % | Prebreaker/press No. of analyses | % | Total No. of analyses | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tew, T. | ARS, Houma | 514 | 15.4 | 655 | 16.4 | 1,169 | 15.9 |
| Veremis, J. | ARS, Houma | 0 | 0 | 57 | 1.4 | 57 | 0.8 |
| Pan, Y.-B. | ARS, Houma | 0 | 0 | 10 | 0.1 | 10 | 0.1 |
| Garrison, D.[1] | ARS, Houma | 867 | 26 | 56 | 1.4 | 923 | 12.6 |
| Dufrene, E. | ARS, Houma | 348 | 10.5 | 234 | 5.9 | 582 | 7.9 |
| Finger, C. | ARS, Houma | 528 | 15.9 | 112 | 2.8 | 640 | 8.7 |
| White, W. | ARS, Houma | 72 | 2.2 | 107 | 2.7 | 179 | 2.4 |
| Legendre, B.[2] | LSU, Baton Rouge | 0 | 0 | 128 | 3.2 | 128 | 1.7 |
| Viator, R. | ARS, Houma | 0 | 0 | 136 | 3.4 | 136 | 1.9 |
| Johnson, R. | ARS, Houma | 0 | 0 | 998 | 23.0 | 998 | 13.6 |
| Grisham, M. | ARS, Houma | 0 | 0 | 506 | 12.7 | 506 | 6.9 |
| Richard, E. | ARS, Houma | 946 | 28.4 | 919 | 23.0 | 1,865 | 25.4 |
| Carlisi, J. | ULL, Lafayette | 0 | 0 | 18 | 0.5 | 18 | 0.2 |
| Flynn, J. | Kleentek | 55 | 1.7 | 20 | 0.5 | 75 | 1.0 |
| Viator, B. | Viator & Assoc. | 0 | 0 | 44 | 1.1 | 44 | 0.6 |
| Total | | 3,330 | 45.4 | 4,000 | 54.6 | 7,330 | 100.0 |

[1]Outfield tests conducted in cooperation with LAES and ASCL scientists
[2]ARS freeze test conducted in cooperation with LAES scientists

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**Insect Rearing: An Indispensable Tool for Successful Pest Management,** *William H. White, Research Entomologist, USDA, ARS, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma LA*

Rearing quality insects is crucial to many aspects of integrated pest management. The growers and processors of the Louisiana sugarcane industry have long recognized this fact and have supported insect rearing at the USDA, ARS, Sugarcane Research Unit by providing funds for both supplies and equipment. Table 1 summarizes our production records for both the sugarcane borer and the borer parasite Cotesia. We produced close to 30,000 borer pupae in 2003. Giving that half of these are female pupae and each female is capable of laying 714 eggs gave us about 10,710,000 larvae to work with. Larvae that were used to advance our recurrent selection program for borer resistance and conduct our yield reduction study. Larvae were also used for several specialty studies in plant resistance. However, we were unable to make progress in our biological control studies even though we produced approximately 30,000 parasites. Our plans were to establish Cotesia in another species of stemborer, *Diatraea evanescenes*, thereby providing an overwintering site for this beneficial insect until sugarcane borer larvae becomes available in cane. However, we encountered unexpected difficulties rearing the second stemborer. We were able to get adults of this moth to mate and lay viable eggs, but the newly hatched larvae did not feed on our sugarcane borer diet. This was unexpected, as larger larvae of this species will readily take to the diet. Our plans are to continue the work in 2004 and hopefully overcome this problem by incorporating freeze-dried grass tissue into the diet. The grass tissue may provide a needed feeding stimulant to encourage newly hatched larvae to accept the diet.

Table 1. Monthly production of sugarcane borer and Cotesia for the 2003 calendar year.

| Month | Sugarcane borer | | Cotesia | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Pupae harvested | Cells put-up | Cocoons harvested | Larva stung |
| January | 2121 | 5120 | 86 | 156 |
| February | 922 | 3648 | 56 | 101 |
| March | 1335 | 6422 | 69 | 141 |
| April | 2775 | 8416 | 223 | 326 |
| May | 4825 | 11822 | 242 | 333 |
| June | 3516 | 11768 | 125 | 178 |
| July | 3361 | 8832 | 50 | 133 |
| August | 2675 | 7416 | 59 | 100 |
| September | 1910 | 5504 | 61 | 110 |
| October | 1789 | 5828 | — | — |
| November | 1569 | 4736 | — | — |
| December | 1970 | 4608 | — | — |
| Average | 2397 | 7010 | 108 | 175 |
| Total | 28768 | 84120 | 971 | 1578 |

**A Molecular Breeding Project for the Louisiana Sugarcane Industry**, *Yong-Bao Pan, Research Plant Molecular Geneticist, Tom Tew, Research Geneticist, John Veremis, Research Geneticist, William White, Research Entomologist, Michael P. Grisham, Research Pathologist, Edward P. Richard, Jr., Supervisory Research Agronomist, All scientists are at USDA-ARS, Mid South Area, Southern Regional Research Center, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA*

We further evaluated morphological traits among the eleven seedling populations that were derived from crosses between wild clones of *S. spontaneum* and commercial lines of sugarcane where the "spont" was the female parent. Without the marker technology to identify the hybrids, we could not have planted these plants legally in the field. We identified and selected 10 inter-specific hybrids in February 2003 from the cross between SES234 X LCP85-384 that showed lower levels of dead leaf tissue, fewer dead terminal buds and no stalk damage following winter temperatures that were in the upper 20's at Houma. Potential F-1 hybrids from several other crosses were also selected for backcrossing. In addition, field evaluation data verified the molecular classification data that were based solely upon the microsatellite DNA fingerprints.

We continued to make progress to use this molecular methodology in addressing the variety verification needs of the Louisiana sugarcane breeding programs. The lead scientist worked closely with varietal development personnel when concerns regarding varietal identification arose. For 2004 we have initiated a plan to fingerprint and thereby verify the identity of all parental clones involved in the crossing programs at Houma, LA and Canal Point, FL.

Several thousand progeny, including F-1s, F-2s and BC-1s that were derived from crosses using Djatiroto (a *S. spontaneum* species) as the female and LCP 85-384 and CP 62-258 as the male were further evaluated in the field. About 60 clones were selected based on high vigor, stubbling ability, good population, fiber/sugar content, resistance to lodging, and response to diseases, borer, and cold temperature. These were advanced to line trials in 2004.

## Upcoming Dates to Remember

**September 13 at 1:30 PM - Certified Prescribed Burn Manager Program -** The only class for 2004 is scheduled for Monday, September 13 at 1:30 PM on the LSU Campus in Room 268D of Knapp Hall. Participants are requested to pre-register for the class. Pre-registration can be by phone (225/578-6998) or email (bcarney@agctr.lsu.edu). *This will be the only opportunity to take the class prior to the harvest.*

**September 23-26, 2004 - Louisiana Sugar Cane Festival and Fair** New Iberia, LA. Go to www.hisugar.org for more information.

Check out the League's website at www.amscl.org

# Louisiana
# Smoke Management Guidelines for Sugarcane Harvesting

All growers should have attended the Certified Burn Manager Program. The list below are the steps you must take when burning.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Step 1.** | **Identify Smoke Sensitive Areas** |
| **Step 2.** | **Obtain Fire Weather Forecast** |
| **Step 3.** | **Develop a Prescribed Burn Plan** |
| **Step 4.** | **Determine Smoke Category Day** |
| **Step 5.** | **Determine Smoke and Ash Screening Distance** |
| **Step 6.** | **Determine Direction of Smoke and Ash Plume** |
| **Step 7.** | **Evaluate the Prescribed Burn Results** |
| **Step 8.** | **Keep good harvest records** |

If you have misplaced your copy or would like additional copies, contact the League office or your county agent.

The League staff wishes to remind all growers that although these guidelines are voluntary, it is vitally important that burning operations be conducted in as efficient a manner as possible in order to manage smoke and ash and reduce their impact on the public.

The future of cane burning depends upon the successful incorporation of these guidelines into your farming operation.

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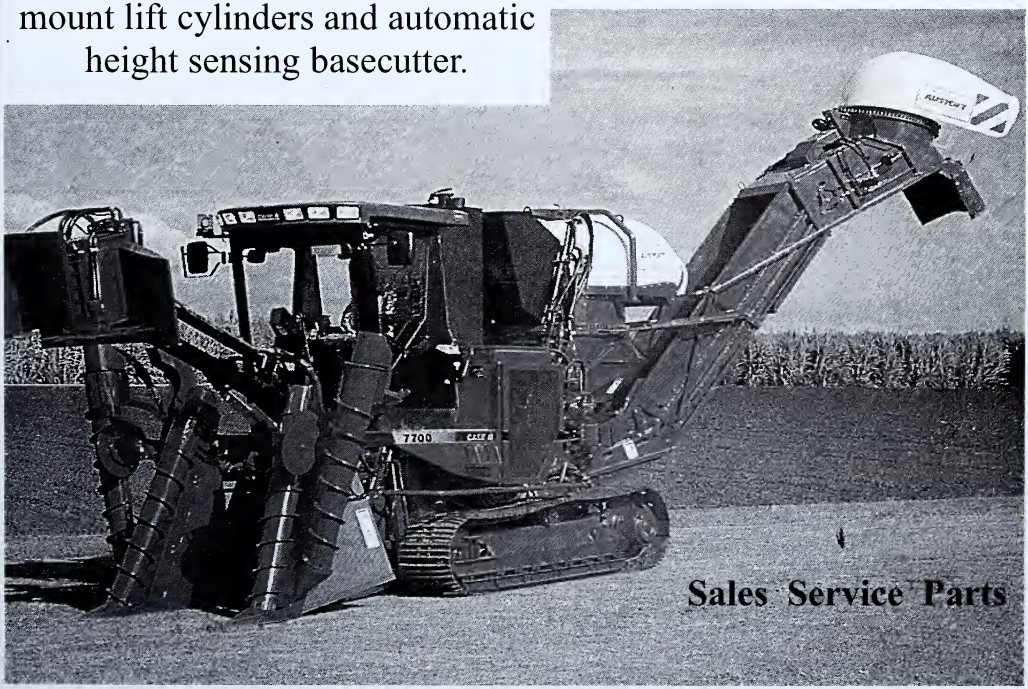


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# CLASSIFIEDS - FOR SALE

**1972 IH 1066 High Crop Tractor** - $3, 500; **1981 JD 4440 High Crop Tractor** - $7,500; **1990 Cameco S30 Single Row Cane Harvester** - cab & air, 4 wheel drive - $14,000; **J & L V-Ditcher** - $750; **3-Row Opening Tool** - $750; **(2) IH 480 Flat Choppers** - $2,000/chopper; **(4) Small Single Axle Planter aids** - $1,200; **IH 3-row Subsoiler** - $1,000; **1996 LMS Drain King** - $2,000; **1995 Cameco CHT 2500 Combine** - cut 10,000 tons on tracks, elevator and feed roller bearing jobs - $57,500; Call Rene Simon at (337) 658-0221 (cell), (337) 367-0258 (home) or e-mail - Simon@cox-internet.com.

**1999 Cameco CH 2500 Combine**, has 1789 hrs.; Complete track job with new style Berco rollers, complete elevator overhaul including chains and sprockets. **(10) Davis Billet Cane Carts** - $9,000 per wagon; **1997 John Deere**, 7410 has 5734 hrs - $30,000; **Heavy Duty Angle Grader Blade** (12') with guage wheels - $3,500. Call (337) 276-5975 or (337) 519-1983.

**1996 Case 7700 Combine,** has 6004 hrs, new 4 blade anti-vortex fan, new 12" differential chopper system; 330 HP Cummins engine. **(3) Broussard High Dump Wagons,** Model 4408, 14.00x 24 tires, 2 rams; **Cane Row Marker** with four plows and two Roller Cone Row Markers. Contact Mark Callegan at (225) 545-8348 (night) or (225) 776-0989 (day).

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**(5) 1997-98 Cameco High Dump Wagons** - $10,000 each. Call Kenneth Taylor at (337) 945-7474.

**1986 Cameco Two-row Harvester,** cab & air - $14,000; **JD 3-row** - $2,000; 3-row Lilliston Cultivator - $500; **45ft. Side Dump Cane Trailer** - $6,000; **(2) 14.9x30 Firestone Radial R-1 tires** take off - $300 for pair); **(2) 18.4X42 Firestone Radial R-2 tires** 45% rubber - $300 for pair; **15 ft. Bush Hog,** excellent condition - $4,500. Call Charlie Guidry at (337) 893-2300 or (337) 652-6325.

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